

THE FORTNIGHTLY

JULY, 1940

THE NEED FOR A POLICY

BY WICKHAM STEED

AS we enter the tenth month of the war the outlook seems more sombre than it has been at any moment. Time, which for eight months we treated as an ally, has worked against us. Hitler took it by the forelock while we dallied. Not until the second week of May did we get the *Government for War* which the country and the Allied cause had sorely needed from the outset. For the boon of being able to stand, in this grave hour, as a united people behind a National Government that we can trust, we have to thank the courage of the Labour Opposition in forcing a vote at the end of the House of Commons debate on May 9. Under Mr. Winston Churchill's leadership we have faced unflinchingly the fierce ordeal of the past seven weeks, and shall face whatever sacrifices and trials the future may hold in store.

Our aim is victory. Nothing short of victory can safeguard our national existence, the existence of France, and the freedom of the world. We are resolved to win it. How and when we cannot yet foresee. But if there's a way where there's a will, the way must be diligently sought and, when found, be firmly trodden. It may be long and hard. As I write, the "Battle of France" has been lost. Paris and a great, perhaps the greater, part of the country are in the enemy's hands. Marshal Pétain's emergency Cabinet has asked for a truce—without accepting the British offer of a complete Franco-British Union that would have fused France and the United Kingdom into one nation. The British Expeditionary Force has been withdrawn to our own shores. We fight on in good heart though hope of victory be deferred. For our fight we need superior strength. While we gather it we shall need a policy both for the waging of war and for the post-war period that must precede the establishment of a strong and stable peace. To the framing of this policy we have to bend our thoughts even while we fight.

It is not always understood that a sound policy may be as potent an instrument of war as are the fighting forces in the field. Costly and cruel experience is now teaching us that our unsound policy in past years made war inevitable and brought us into it under unfavourable conditions. It allowed the enemy not only to seize and to hold the military initiative, to grasp the advantages of a sustained offensive, but also to seize and to hold the advantage of the offensive in a policy that his propaganda served. During the past ten months we have tried to cover our lack of policy, and of an efficient propaganda which policy alone can inspire, by declaring that we fight against "Hitlerism", for human freedom, and for the restoration of liberty to the nations which Nazi Germany has enslaved. We have not forced the enemy into a defensive position by working out and stating the only terms on which we could make peace. We have hardly thought about them. We have let our minds be governed by the obvious, albeit insufficient, truth that our first care must be to defeat the enemy. However imperative this truth may be, it is not the only truth. Even as we fight for victory we have to tackle the main problem of the war and of any peace that may follow—the German problem.

Few, if any, of us fully understand the German problem or realize that military victory alone would not avail to solve it. We say that we mean to destroy "Hitlerism". Do we yet perceive that Hitler, the man, might be driven from power, and Nazism be replaced by some other system, without touching the root of the German problem itself? Both before and since the advent of Hitlerism, I, for one, have brought to the study of this problem such wits and experience as I could command. Yet it has never ceased to puzzle me, perhaps because no English mind can readily grasp all its complexities. Nor are French minds much abler to master it, despite the painful knowledge of the German character and of German methods that Frenchmen have acquired by dint of suffering invasion. I doubt, indeed, whether Britain or France can, severally or jointly, find the answer to the German problem by themselves. They need the help of German minds and, perhaps, the co-operation of the German peoples. I say "peoples", not "people", advisedly.

German writers often refer to the German *Stämme*, a term which may be rendered inadequately by "tribes" or "tribal stocks". I prefer "peoples".

How is German help to be got? Primarily by working with Germans of upright mind—there are many such—who possess a "European sense" and are determined opponents of Nazism as destructive of what is best in Germany. During the past six or seven years I have constantly sought to enlist the help of some of these men. I have asked them to outline a policy that might enable the Western democracies to discomfit Hitler and Hitlerism in the interest of the German peoples. Before the war these men were agreed upon one thing only. It was that of all conceivable policies the "appeasement" which British and French Governments were obstinately practising was the worst, and would be the most fatal to European peace. Since the war began my German friends are all agreed upon another point—a point which non-Germans can appreciate as fully as they. It is that the first step in any approach to successful treatment of the German problem must be the military discomfiture of the Third Reich. Upon what should follow so salutary and difficult an achievement they are neither at one among themselves nor in full agreement with non-German students of the German problem.

This may be because the scope and the character of the war transcend the political framework within which the problem of Germany has usually been examined. In the *FORTNIGHTLY* for October, 1939, Mr. A. A. Milne recognized this circumstance when he wrote :—

This war seems to me to be a civil war : a war of ideas : a revolt, in which Germans are fighting on our side, or we on theirs, against an intolerable form of Government. This, then, is not an international war, a war between two Governments, but a war between two forms of government ; between Democracy and Totalitarianism ; or more simply a war between Liberty and Slavery.

In a memorandum which I have before me a well-known German, whose knowledge of Hitler and Hitlerism has been directly gained by personal experience, puts a similar view in different words. He says :—

As in the religious wars of the Middle Ages, fronts are formed in this war along spiritual lines, not according to nations, classes, or races. It is the spiritual and ideological question of personalism or collectivism, of the rule

of the people or of the Totalitarian State, that divides Europe into two hostile camps from the Tagus to the Urals, and really makes of this war a "European Civil War" with fronts that cut through all peoples.

For this reason smaller or larger parties are to-day to be found in every European nation in opposition to the official watchwords, parties that are fighting either practically or spiritually in the enemy's ranks against their own Government. It is a fact, a fact pregnant with consequences, that the fronts in this war are not formed according to the national standpoints of peoples but from the spiritual standpoint of each individual. The "religious question" on which Europe is now fighting is: "Shall Europe in future be organized under a totalitarian order of collectivism (of a class or a race) or in accordance with a renovated order of democracy, personalism and Christianity?"

No Allied policy that may be framed or pursued in this war can be completely successful unless it gain, first, the tacit support and, presently, the active help of the considerable minority of Germans in Germany whose opposition to Nazism is uncompromising, and of the less clearly-defined body of Italian opposition to Mussolini and Fascism. Up to the eve of Mussolini's dagger-stroke at the back of France, Allied policy was as mistaken in dealing with him as it had been in dealing with Hitler. It clung to "appeasement", it declared Franco-British readiness to settle by negotiation all "legitimate" Fascist claims, and it showed no understanding of the elementary truth that the only language that gangster-dictators heed is the language of force. Any other speech they look upon as the idiom of weakness or of fear.

So we are now at war against Mussolini and Fascism as well as against Hitler and Nazism. The fate of the two men and of their systems is henceforth inseparable—as, indeed, it always was. Not to have recognized the certainty that the defeat of Mussolini in the Abyssinian war must entail the downfall of Hitler was the major folly of the impolicy that culminated in the Hoare-Laval agreement of November, 1935. British public feeling revolted against that notorious and immoral "agreement" but the harm was done. At a crucial moment it estranged British feeling from France to such an extent that Hitler's reoccupation of the demilitarized Rhineland zone in 1936 was widely looked upon in this country as just retribution for the behaviour of M. Laval in selling Abyssinia to Italy for the sake of a worthless Franco-Italian understanding. One popular British journal even went so far as to entitle its leading article

upon the Rhineland occupation: "Well done, Hitler!" Though we may now find that the overthrow of Mussolini and of Fascism is a necessary preliminary to the discomfiture of Hitler and Hitlerism, the fact remains that the German, not the Italian, problem will continue to be our chief preoccupation. For this reason it must be the main object of Allied policy.

Time and again since our war began against Hitler and Hitlerism I have tried to induce my German friends to concert and to set down the main lines of what they would think a satisfactory solution of the German problem in a Europe cleansed of Nazism and organized for peace. — Any such solution, I urged, must recognize the need for valid security against future German aggression. The result was disappointing. Anti-Nazi Germans, I found, had many sound ideas but were unable to put forward any dominating principle beyond that of the military defeat of Nazism. I was almost driven to conclude that few, if any, Germans outside Germany could make up their minds upon the future of their country, or upon the course they would wish the Allies to follow, after Hitler and Hitlerism had been overthrown.

At this juncture the proofs of the most enlightening book upon Nazism and the Nazis that has yet been written were sent to me by a London firm of publishers. It has since appeared under the title *Germany: Jekyll and Hyde*, by Sebastian Haffner*. So keen was its analysis of Nazism, and so striking its diagnosis of the Hitlerite disease, that I wished to meet the author. I found him to be a North German "Aryan," of remarkable perspicacity, who had contrived to hold out in Germany until less than two years ago and then to make good his escape. Even more valuable than his analysis and diagnosis were his suggestions for the policy which the Allies should follow in dealing both with Nazism and with Germany after the destruction of Nazism. His book cannot be too warmly recommended to every serious student of the German problem.

No review or summary of this book can do it full justice. It must be read. Some account of its main purpose and thesis will nevertheless be useful. Here is a passage from the Foreword:—

*Secker and Warburg. 8s. 6d.

This book attempts to do for British and French propaganda what the aerial photographs of the Siegfried Line and its "Hinterland", brought back by reconnaissance aircraft, achieve for British and French artillery. Propaganda hitherto has shot far less accurately than artillery. It obviously lacks a clear view of its target. Sometimes it speaks to Germans as if they were Englishmen. Sometimes it tries, in one and the same pamphlet, to influence Nazis and ingenuous patriots as well as the partisans of the German opposition—with the result that it misses all alike and arouses general mistrust. It relies on accidental chance hits. It has not yet studied its range.

This German psychological landscape, with its zigzag contours, is not only the artillery range of war propaganda. It is the foundation of future peace. One can already mark those of its sites whereon peace can and cannot be erected, and determine the exact character of each. Such research cannot begin too soon.

By way of helping in this research the author dissects the character of Hitler in a chapter so well written that enjoyment of its literary quality is apt to hide from readers its psychological penetration. Two excerpts may be given. After demonstrating the egocentric criminality of Hitler's character, Sebastian Haffner writes :

... if the criminal, in this most dangerous power-centre (the State) where every switch releases untold consequences, takes the place of the responsible, benevolent statesman, universal catastrophe is inevitable. It is tragic that the statesmen did not instinctively grasp this in time in Hitler's case. This man, from the first day of his advent to power, has had full diplomatic recognition *de jure* and *de facto*, and has negotiated as an equal at the conference table with people whose first duty it was to have had him locked up. Now we are in the midst of the catastrophe. The one way of saving ourselves is immediate riddance of Hitler, dead or alive. But this is by the way.

We have seen the only stable idea behind Hitler's policy. It is, in a word, Hitler. However, we have not fully probed into his method, the method that made possible the stupendous rise of a down-and-out, first to civic reputation and finally to the highest rank, and that is still employed by the "statesman" with obstinate monotony.

This method is again so immensely simple and obvious, that in their search for Hitler's secret of success men have almost always overlooked it. It is called "Force".

But "riddance of Hitler" must be brought about with insight into German conditions if the world is not to be cursed with the survival of Hitlerism, in the form of a potent Hitler myth, after Hitler himself has been got rid of. Otherwise, Herr Haffner insists, Nazism would possess what it now lacks—an indestructible myth. "Hitler would simply return in the rôle that Lenin is playing in Stalin's Russia and Dollfuss played in Schuschnigg's Austria". So he concludes :

The removal of Hitler must be total to be effective : political, moral, physical. Whether the physical removal should take the form of execution or permanent exile, such as to St. Helena, is of secondary importance. What is important is that it should have the character of an execution of judgment, and that the judgment should leave no doubt that a continuation of the Hitler régime is impossible, that rule can no longer be carried on in Germany in his name. Only in this way can we oust the firmly entrenched Nazi leadership which would otherwise keep Hitler alive beyond his death. It is true that the Nazi leaders have no firm hold on the nation, not even on the Nazi rank and file, but depend on Hitler. Failing his power and his person, the Hitler myth would suffice to maintain them in their position. If we are to be rid of him, Hitler would have to be three times done to death—as institution, man, legend. The institution, the Führer, must be abolished, the man removed and the spurious glory of his successes obliterated.

If Hitler be thus thrice exterminated, the Nazi régime will automatically come to an end.

No whit less shrewd are Sebastian Haffner's successive chapters on "The Nazi Leaders", "The Nazis", "The Loyal Population" (by which he means the large percentage of Germans who support Hitler in success and would turn away from him in failure); "The Disloyal Population" (who passively oppose him yet fear the consequences of his downfall); and "The Opposition", whose resistance is absolute and irreducible and with whom no German can get into touch without absolute guarantees of trustworthiness. In a further chapter upon "The Emigrés" Herr Haffner rightly criticizes the failure of the British and French Governments to treat these men as friends and allies in the great fight against Hitlerism. By "émigrés" he does not mean the mass of fugitives or refugees from Nazi brutality, but the men of moral and political worth and eminence who left Germany for the definite purpose of working abroad against the arch-enemy of their people. But in present circumstances, and with an eye to the future, it is the final chapter on "Possibilities" that will receive most attention, though the pertinence of this chapter to the author's main thesis cannot be appreciated without careful reading of his whole book. And, like the book itself, it cannot be summarized without danger of distortion.

In view of its importance I shall, nevertheless, try to place it in what seems to me its proper setting. Since the beginning of the war there has been much discussion, and some controversy, among Germans as well as non-Germans, upon the expediency

and the feasibility of resolving the Nazi Reich or, rather, of pre-Hitler Germany, into its component parts so as to forestall the danger of future German aggression and to organize Europe for lasting peace. In this discussion I have taken a modest part by seeking to put British and French students of the German problem on their guard against the danger of any policy that should be inspired solely by the idea of "breaking up Germany". It seemed to me, on the one hand, that to proclaim this idea as an Allied war aim would be to play Hitler's game by helping him to demand and to get support (even from his opponents in Germany) as the champion of German national unity. On the other hand, any crude attempt on the part of Germany's foes to break her up, even were it successful for a time, would provide the majority of Germans with a cry and a rallying point for a future war of which the aim would be to unite Germany again. How to avoid both horns of this dilemma, without leaving any post-Nazi system of German Government in a position once more to imperil European peace by secret rearmament, appeared to me a major term of the German problem.

With one reservation, which I shall presently make, it is on this very point that Herr Haffner's book is most suggestive and helpful. He is a Prussian; but, unlike many Prussians and a very large number of non-Prussian Germans, he is singularly free from what is commonly understood by "the Prussian spirit". His outlook is German, and good German at that, for it is also European. Briefly, too briefly, it is this: *The Allies should decide and should declare that no dealings with any Nazi Government, however composed, will in any circumstances be possible, and that the preliminary condition of any peace negotiation or treaty with another German Government must be the punishment, inflicted on the very culprits, of all the crimes committed by the Nazis.* These two measures—the expulsion of the Nazi Government and the punishment of Nazi crimes—must figure among the results of this war if it is not to have been waged entirely in vain. But with what kind of German Government would peace negotiations or peace be possible? Certainly not with any Government that might be set up by German soldiers and officials, with a subsequent reorganization of the Reich on conservative-monarchical lines. To overthrow Hitler with the

help of the Army and, with the Army still intact, to treat for peace with a Government backed by the Army, would allow the German Reich to escape unweakened, and perhaps with some gain of prestige. To accept the Reich of the Generals would be to accept new threats, crises and wars. What distinguishes the Third Reich from the German Reich are shades of colouring. Otherwise they are identical. Their spirit of aggression, aggrandisement and world domination is the same. Herr Haffner continues: "And I should like to add more quietly that to Germany, too, they appear the same: utter contempt, neglect, and destruction of the German mission, make the Reich—Third or not—a German malady."

One needs to know a good deal of German history to understand the force of this argument. And only those who have lived and worked in German lands for considerable periods may be inclined to agree with the following powerful passage in Herr Haffner's final chapter:

The Germans feel an inescapable doom hanging over them, a magic spell. Indeed is it not magical—the dæmonic relentlessness with which the historical tradition of the German Reich defends itself against its foes? Nevertheless, if a real peace is possible, the spell must be broken. Which means: *the German Reich must disappear, and the last seventy-five years of German history must be erased. The Germans must retrace their steps to the point where they took the wrong path—to the year 1866. No peace is conceivable with the Prussian Reich which was born at that time, and whose last logical expression is no other than Nazi Germany. And no vital "other" Germany is anywhere to be found but that which in that year was worsted by the caprice of war—without ever totally succumbing.*

In no way, Herr Haffner insists, are the possibilities opened by this prospect to be confounded with the "partition" and "dismemberment" of Germany. They must be approached and realized by Germans themselves in the light of German history and on the principle that whereas the German peoples are suited for life in smaller States, respectful of and representing their diverse characters, their union in one German Reich under Prussian or Nazi control has brought nothing but disaster to themselves and to Europe. Salvation for Germany is only to be found in a return to forms of State life which were progressively crushed after the Prussian victory over Austria in 1866.

How Herr Haffner proposes that Germany should resolve herself into autonomous States such as "Austria", "Bavaria",

"Wurttemberg and Baden", "the Rhineland", "Lower (or Nether) Saxony", "Saxony-Thuringia", and "Prussia", and what the economic and political relations between them should be, readers of his book must study for themselves. A wise Allied policy might, he believes, be helpful in bringing about this desirable transformation which many Germans would welcome from the bottom of their hearts. In this, I think, he is right; and the chief reservation I have to make is that valid guarantees would be necessary to ensure that the transformation should be lasting, and should not serve as a temporary expedient to enable the German peoples, severally, altogether to escape the consequences of the havoc which they have repeatedly wrought in Europe when they were marshalled, jointly, for aggression by the Hohenzollern and the Nazi Reichs.

Enough has been said to show the significance of this remarkable book as a contribution to the indispensable search for a sound Allied policy. Unless I am entirely mistaken little or nothing has yet been done in Great Britain, and not much in France, to organize this search. This is why I have recently suggested that there be formed, without delay, a "Policy Committee" under our present National Government for the purpose of working out a policy which the War Cabinet could consider, adopt with such amendments as might be thought necessary and use as a basis for a propaganda offensive against the enemy. Such a Committee, which need not be large, would fulfil the function of a Thinking General Staff for the Allied cause. It would relieve responsible Ministers of much work and worry. It could keep in close touch with the leading anti-Nazi Germans, Austrians, Poles, Czechoslovaks and, of course, whatever centre of French resistance may still continue the fight.

If the Prime Minister could find time to consider this suggestion and to instruct one or more of his colleagues to take it in hand, he would, I believe, do something that might prove to be a step towards the winning of the peace when military victory shall have been gained, if not, indeed, a step that would hasten the advent of victory itself.

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BY ADMIRAL SIR HERBERT RICHMOND

FOR at least the last three and a half centuries it has been one of the cardinal axioms of British foreign policy that the Low Countries should not fall under the domination of a great military and naval power. The reason is plain. Between and including the Texel and Dunkirk there is a series of harbours in which shipping capable of transporting large armies can be assembled, behind which bodies of troops can be secretly gathered for sudden embarkation, and from which the voyage to England occupies a few hours only. A great Power in possession of the Scheldt holds, in Lord Salisbury's words, a pistol pointed at the heart of England. Even though this country should possess that superiority at sea which is essential for the security of her trade and oversea interests and territories, she would be so much exposed, in peace, to a "bolt from the blue" that she would be forced, at considerable expense, permanently to take precautions against a treacherous attack; while in war, the keeping of an effective watch upon those many possible points of departure, with forces of a strength necessary to cope with the men-of-war and to deal with the transport vessels, was not possible.

The precautions which were needed to guard against surprise were, in the first place, an intelligence system, capable of giving warning of the assembly of land forces in the back areas and of shipping in the various ports or waterways; a scouting system off the ports to give notice of a movement, to follow it up, and to report whither it was bound; and fighting squadrons and ships so placed and in such readiness that they could at once move to overhaul and intercept the intended invaders before they reached their destination or had completed their disembarkation. On land, there were military commands so disposed as to offer opposition at the landing places and support

the larger bodies from central positions. In the great Napoleonic thrust of 1803-5, the regular army at home consisting, at the time of the resumption of war, of 57,000 men, was raised by the summer of 1804 to 87,000 regulars, 80,000 militia and 343,000 volunteers.

In the past there were at sea two principal tasks to attend to. The enemy had a force of capital ships with which to protect his transports directly, to keep a way clear for them to advance, or to divert our larger ships to some distant area or objective: a British squadron capable of dealing with this force was needed. The position in which it would lie, or from which it would operate, would be either the Downs or the Gunfleet, at such times as it was not actually cruising at sea. The transports themselves had also to be dealt with, and for this purpose there would be a flotilla force of small vessels, which, in the Napoleonic threat already alluded to numbered some 1,500 craft, of which some were cruising off the enemy's ports or bombarding his transports, and others were in anchorages on the British coast from which they could move rapidly in a strong body, or bodies, to whatever point upon the coast was in danger. Their instructions laid down that they should devote their whole efforts to destroying or disabling the transport vessels.

Further to the westward, on the Channel shore, there were other possible points of assembly—Boulogne, Calais, Cherbourg, St. Malo, none capable of harbouring large fleets but all spacious enough to accommodate numerous transport vessels; while finally, in the extreme west, there was the great naval base of Brest. In the Channel the same system was followed as in the Narrow Seas. A fleet watched the fleet in Brest, lesser vessels watched the minor ports, an intelligence organization kept ministers informed of troop movements.

It was never assumed that it would be possible to prevent small bodies of ships, accompanied by a few transports, from evading the watch and getting to sea without interception: and even of reaching some part of the British coasts. Such forces as might be expected thus to succeed must be dealt with by the land forces, whose object had a dual character. They pinned down the smaller bodies of invaders, and they forced the enemy,

if he desired a decision, to send forces in such numbers that evasion was difficult, that a great quantity of transport was needed, disembarkation took time, and the risk was vastly increased.

What is the position to-day ?

In the geographical sense, the enemy has acquired the position which it was our object to keep in other hands. He occupies all the harbours on the western face of Europe from Narvik, recently evacuated by us, to the south of France. The port of Zeebrugge has been blocked, and it appears that obstructions have also been put into the ports of Boulogne and Dunkirk, so that these, at least, may not be available for his use for some time ; and possibly other ports have received a similar attention. But he has all the deep water harbours in Norway, the Dutch naval base at the Texel is in his hands, and the port of IJmuiden and all the debouchments of the Rhine, the Maas and the Scheldt between the Hook of Holland and Flushing. He has his own ports in the mouths of the Elbe, the Ems and the Jade. Thus, from the point of view of position, he has many bases from which he can exercise threats. In a brochure by the German Professor Banse, lines of movement from the Dutch ports to several points on the East Coast are suggested, together with another to be launched from Ireland upon the region of the Clyde.

Positions are one element in the problem. Transport is another. One difficulty which confronted our invaders in the past was that of assembling a sufficient number of transport craft overseas to carry an army adequate to conquer the country ; for to reach the ports at the eastern end of the Channel shipping had to run the gauntlet of British cruisers. Napoleon solved the problem by building large boats in the channel ports of Boulogne, Etaples, Wimereux and Ambleteuse. By themselves or with such flotilla protection as he had at his disposal, these flat-bottomed boats could not face the British flotilla craft, and his schemes for getting his battle fleets into the Channel and holding the crossing long enough for them to reach the shores of England, failed. Hence, they never moved from their harbours. Those difficulties of transport do not exist for the enemy to-day. The German, Dutch and Belgian ports in his

possession are connected with the interior of Germany, and with each other by an extensive system of inland waterways, by river and canal, which normally serve the purposes of traffic from the interior to the sea ports. Some of these are navigable by sea-going vessels for a distance, all are navigable by barges, those on the Rhine reaching a size as large as 2,500 tons, while others are of 1,500, 1,000, 700 and 500 tons : in fine, there is a choice of size and ample numbers. These are shallow draft craft, and though highly vulnerable to gun fire and to bombs, run less danger from torpedoes ; though from them they are not by any means immune. As these craft already lie within the country there is no difficulty in assembling them and embarking troops, without exposure to attack from the sea. For the longer sea voyages, from the Bight or from the Norwegian ports, sea-going ships are available ; for though the German merchant marine has lost, according to accounts, over 800,000 tons of shipping, there is ample still available ; and, as we have seen, it is not possible to prevent ships moving from the Baltic to the western Norwegian ports.

Having ports and shipping, the next requirement is to cross the sea. The dangers against which the transport fleet have to be guarded are the light cruiser forces in the Southern bases, the flotilla forces of a variety of types, mines, submarines and the air flotillas. It is one thing to move up the Kattegat, in which submarines only could be kept to oppose him, and quite another to move across the North Sea or the Straits of Dover. We may not assume, however, that because a thing is dangerous, or even though there should appear to be a certainty of heavy losses, the attempt would not be made. The old French schemes—there are many of them and doubtless the German Staff are as well acquainted with them as we are ourselves—were informed with every species of ruse, feint and diversion.

What the strength of the heavier ship forces of the German Navy now is, is doubtless known to the Admiralty ; and we may feel assured that a force, with an ample margin of superiority, is at hand to deal with whatever movement those vessels might make in conjunction with an attempted invasion.

Assuming that he should be satisfied that, either by evasion or by fighting their way, his transports can, without undue loss,

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cross the sea in the face of the several forms of opposition they have to meet, they have then to land their men and material. Here they have a choice to make. Shall they attempt to seize a harbour, so that their ships are secured, while disembarking, against sea attack and have some landing facilities for the heavy material—or shall they land upon an open beach, as the British did at the Dardanelles? Harbours are none too plentiful, and such as there are are defended by mines and guns, to say nothing of the aircraft which would rapidly be brought to the spot or spots. The beaches upon which landings are practicable are well known to us, and, as we experienced as landers on Gallipoli, small entrenched forces make these beaches very unhealthy spots. But as we must assume that the enemy is well aware of this, and as we know that he possesses air transport in the two forms, we have to consider what action is appropriate to prevent such defences being taken in the rear. One thing appears to the present writer certain: that with so many possible lines of action open to the enemy, hazardous though they all may be, we should call into the service of the home service battalions and local defence volunteers all who are not recruited for the army.

The task of the invader is not yet complete. He has now to conquer the country, or, if his object is limited to the destruction of selected centres of industry, to the completion of such destruction. In the former case he has to maintain his supplies of munitions. He must in that case keep open the sea lines of communication. In other words he must have obtained command of those particular sea zones, keeping them free from injury from the sea and the air forces of the country. This assumes nothing less than a domination of those forces by sea, or by air, or by a combination of the two, and the assumption is a considerable one; but we are dealing with gamblers who play for high stakes, and, as was said of Napoleon in his day, we cannot say that though the operation appears reckless, the attempt may not be made.

DUNKIRK

BY E. H. PHILLIPS

*(An eye-witness account by one who operated the last Y.M.C.A.
Mobile Canteen at Dunkirk)*

ASK any survivor from Dunkirk to describe what happened there and you will find his recollections extremely confused, though some may be unpleasantly vivid. It was like living through a succession of earthquakes which lasted several days and nights. For the majority Dunkirk was a climax to a fortnight or more of fighting and marching, and in my own case was the final scene of several days of intense activity and confusion.

On May 17, a week after Germany had invaded Belgium, I and other Y.M.C.A. workers were struggling to release three of our large Tea Cars (Mobile Canteens carrying tea, chocolate, cigarettes, soap, etc., for the troops) which had been marooned by the wreckage of a bombed building in Arras. During the afternoon we were surprised by orders to evacuate Arras within two hours, the suggestion being that German tanks had broken through and were rapidly approaching the town.

Ten Y.M.C.A. Tea Cars were working from Arras and these were loaded with as much stores as they would hold, a considerable balance having to be abandoned. The convoy of Tea Cars with over 20 workers spent that night in the open a few miles from the coast, proceeding the following day to Boulogne. At Boulogne the news suggested that the Germans were being held (the B.E.F. were holding them) and, knowing that the troops and wounded needed tea and cigarettes, it was decided to send forward three expeditions—mine towards Lille, another towards Arras, and the third towards Amiens.

My contingent of three Tea Cars and nine men had a rough passage, the roads being so packed with refugees that we had to

travel in low gear most of the way, but Lille was reached on the second day. The city was deserted and we pushed on to the Belgian border, where at Lannoy a Y.M.C.A. centre was still operating. As we expected, there was a dearth of cigarettes and chocolate : officers, padres, and dispatch riders stopped us to ask for cigarettes for whole companies and battalions. We were preparing to settle down to work when the news came through that the Germans were in Amiens and that the B.E.F., though it was holding its line, was going to retire. After only a few hours at Lannoy, we had to evacuate, and were well on the way to Armentieres before putting up for the night.

It was difficult for the military authorities to advise us for the German break-through to the Channel coast was only half-confirmed and had happened with such bewildering speed. We felt that our best plan was to return to Boulogne—only a few hours by road—to seek fresh instructions from Y.M.C.A. headquarters. Again we encountered multitudes of refugees. An old man wheeled a bicycle on which sat his wife ; great farm waggons piled high with baggage blocked the way, handcarts by the hundred followed each other in slow procession. There was no bread to be had, little water and always the menace from the air. There were roads lined with the bodies of refugees machine-gunned by Hitler's airmen.

Our three Tea Cars got through to Armentieres and from there to Cassel, passing thousands of fleeing Belgians. It was at Cassel that a new phenomenon was seen—refugees travelling in both directions. A few miles from there we met a convoy of British troops coming from the west : they had commandeered the queerest assortment of ancient French lorries. We asked for news and learnt that German tanks were supposed to be in St. Omer a few miles down the road, between us and Boulogne. The troops were trying to get instructions. The only obvious course for us was to try and reach Dunkirk, 15 to 20 miles away.

The stream of refugees dwindled and was replaced by convoys of British and French lorries, some going to the coast and others inland towards Armentieres, where every village along the road was held by our troops. We reached a marshy plain and in the distance saw a great column of smoke rising and

drifting like a thundercloud westwards to the horizon : we were in sight of Dunkirk.

So far this account has been in the nature of an introduction, covering as briefly as possible our movements during five days and nights, but omitting a hundred and one incidents, such as numerous air raids, the Tea Cars' service to the men, sections and convoys of troops who had lost touch with their headquarters and so on. This introduction should help, however, to show that even in our case we had little rest for more than a week before reaching Dunkirk, meeting all the time with rumours that German tanks were here, there and everywhere. For over a fortnight, before arriving at the port, the men of the B.E.F. had been on the move, first into Belgium, and then fighting a rearguard action, harassed by hundreds of German planes night and day with little or no food or water.

On the outskirts of Dunkirk we were stopped by a long line of lorries carrying petrol. The men needed tea, water, anything drinkable ; they had not seen a cigarette for days and they were hungry. The road was raised above the surrounding fields and sheltered by a tall avenue of trees, with a canal alongside. Twice in twenty minutes German bombers passed overhead ; fortunately these were intent upon raiding the port and missed the petrol convoy.

We met a Brigadier who was trying to trace a large unit of men. He advised us to camp out in one of the nearby farms for two or three days, until the position cleared. So that night the Tea Cars joined what was left of a Midland A.A. battery, sharing a most comfortable barn. This battery had only escaped from Arras at the last minute, having to abandon its guns. On their way they had run into a section of German tanks ; thanks to the heroism of the driver of the leading lorry, who pulled across the road to block the way, the others had managed to turn and get away.

Early the next morning a few rifles and some ammunition arrived and men of the battery were detailed to go and mount guard at a barricade two miles up the road to wait for German tanks. We had a busy morning boiling water for tea with the equipment in the Tea Cars and handing out cigarettes and

chocolate : there was no question of charging for anything in the circumstances.

During the afternoon we served several small parties of British troops, stragglers who had escaped from different centres cut off by German tanks. All these stragglers spoke of German tanks being in the neighbourhood. It appeared that Dunkirk was in imminent danger of being cut off like Calais and Boulogne. All day German 'planes were busy bombing the port. It was, therefore, decided to evacuate two-thirds of our Y.M.C.A. workers, leaving myself with three others to carry on.

After these workers had left we moved our three Tea Cars to Malo les Bains, the sea-side resort adjoining Dunkirk. Two of the Cars were prepared for service and by nightfall (about 10.0 p.m.) we set out for the docks to serve troops, stragglers and others, who were filtering into the town at all hours of the day and night. Dividing Malo from Dunkirk is a canal and at the bridge we were stopped by a formidable barricade. Here we learnt that no vehicles could pass and the impression was gained that German tanks were too close to be healthy. We had to leave the Tea Cars the wrong side of the barricade and scramble through barbed wire to reach the Dunkirk side of the canal. The position appeared so serious that I had to order the remaining three Y.M.C.A. workers to leave : we walked down to the deserted docks, taking shelter two or three times during air raids, and at dawn I saw them on to a torpedo boat.

Like other mornings the dawn came clear and fresh, and, like other mornings, with the coming of the sun the fears and doubts of the previous night to a large extent evaporated. This was Friday, a full four days before the Navy arrived to begin taking men off the beaches. Both Dunkirk and Malo had the scars of air raids with large numbers of burnt out buildings and bomb craters in the roadways, but it was still possible to drive round the streets with ease. Even the docks which had been the main target of the German bombers, were 75 per cent. undamaged. Many of the warehouses had been wrecked or gutted by fire and a great column of smoke still rose from one corner where an oil dump had been burning for two or three days, but the jetties were comparatively unharmed and some buildings were still in service.

By 5.0 a.m. I was able to get first one Tea Car and then a second through the barricade and into Dunkirk and start the boilers going for tea. The Cars were pulled up under trees near a small wooded park where scores of Army trucks were sheltering. Officers and men lined up for early morning tea, a packet of cigarettes, and a bar of chocolate. Everyone of the men had at least one hair-raising story to tell. The drivers of lorries had been on the move for days and were about to leave to try and get through to the B.E.F. with supplies.

There was the usual early morning strafe, repeated at two and three-hourly intervals, but the number of German 'planes was not large and their objective—the docks—was half-a-mile away. They might drop a few incendiary or one or two high explosive bombs in passing, but nothing serious at this stage. Most of the men were suffering from lack of sleep. There was a limited amount of bully and biscuit, but water was scarce, the town's supply having been well bombed some days before.

The chief sufferers at this time were the A.M.P.C., the pioneers, the "pick-and-shovel men", mostly men over military age, veterans of the last war, classed normally as non-combatants. I came across one company of "Amps" who had only been recruited early in April. They had a month's training at home, had reached France in the middle of May and had gone straight to the Belgian frontier. At the Belgian frontier they had been given rifles and set to guard a bridge against German tanks which were fortunately diverted a short distance away, leaving them free to continue a sixty-mile journey to Dunkirk.

It was the "Amps" who were on the docks unloading ships during these periodic strafes. One of the ships carried ammunition and the Germans seemed to know it, for they concentrated on that wharf. The ship and ammunition escaped, but more often than not a number of "Amps" were killed and wounded.

Though the two Y.M.C.A. Tea Cars I had with me carried 25 gallons of tea and a reserve of about 40 gallons of water, and issues were limited to half-a-pint per head, all was finished by the middle of the morning. There was nothing more remarkable than the eagerness of the men to get a cup of tea and the cheering effect it had upon them. The search for fresh supplies of water

was only solved by my discovery of a brackish well in the back garden of an old house in Malo. The house next door was burning merrily.

By the time I got back late in the afternoon there were more stragglers waiting. There were half-a-dozen youngsters who had escaped from Calais by creeping down to the beach at night, taking a small boat, and rowing out into the Channel where they had been picked up by a French destroyer. There were other survivors who had been walking across country for three or four days, hiding from German tanks in woods and fields; men who had stopped to blow up bridges and had lost half their comrades.

The following day—Saturday—saw a strengthening of defences of all kinds in and around Dunkirk. The number of A.A. guns seemed to be trebled. If anybody had a rough passage in Dunkirk it was the men on the A.A. guns: there was no time to rest or sleep for the raids were so regular: they had to carry on under constant bombing in sweltering sunshine with scanty supplies of food and water.

All this time hundreds of wounded from the B.E.F. were arriving in Dunkirk by rail and by road. Ambulance trains and lorries waited outside the town until a hospital ship arrived and were then rushed to the quayside. More often than not there was a raid while wounded were being put on board, but the work went on without break, R.A.S.C. drivers standing by their lorries and nurses carrying on making the men comfortable. The strain of standing by, of carrying on in the open with bombs dropping in quantity in the neighbourhood and A.A. guns filling the air with shrapnel is difficult to exaggerate, but there was no flinching—it had to be done. There were casualties, especially in the later stages, but they were surprisingly small and slight. While distributing cigarettes among one of these convoys of ambulances I saw coming down the line two wounded men supporting a third with a bandaged foot; the lame soldier was in agony but wanted to make sure of getting a cigarette.

During the week-end the air raids became more frequent and bombs began to drop in Malo and Dunkirk as well as on the docks. The strengthening of A.A. gun defences, however, was most reassuring. At first we had retired under trees and into

cellars and shelters and the one constant complaint had been—"If only we could hit back we wouldn't mind." There is no question that constant air raids can be most demoralizing: the whine of the 'plane when it power-dives, the whistle of falling bombs and the concussion of their explosion, coupled with the firing of numbers of A.A. guns creates an illusion that the world is coming to its end at any moment. Gradually, afterwards, it dawned on the men that a good shelter meant safety and that the damage done by one or two air raids is surprisingly small, whatever the noise. Wave after wave of bombers for hours at a time are a different matter and can and did produce chaos. Another question heard in every air raid shelter was—"Where's our R.A.F.?" Again men gradually realized that the R.A.F. would, to be effective, be fighting and intercepting some distance away, but the perfectly natural desire was to see our machines, for "seeing is believing".

It was a Sunday night that the first large bodies of B.E.F. troops began to arrive in Dunkirk. As far as I could gather every use had been made of these troops by those in command to create a strong land defence for a respectable radius round the town. Through this defence now began to pour thousands of men, British and French, all with orders to concentrate upon the port.

At 8.30 a.m. on Monday, May 27, a day of intense bombardment, I was in the centre of Dunkirk outside the local military headquarters, when the all-too-familiar drone of 'planes was heard. We waited for the A.A. guns, but nothing happened; it was a squadron of the R.A.F.—much to everyone's surprise and relief. Ten minutes later came the drone of 'plane engines again; nobody took any notice until suddenly the A.A. guns went wild. I only had time to crawl underneath my Tea Car with one or two other men when the 'planes came swooping down, one dropping a salvo of four bombs about 150 yards away, the blast lifting us all clear off the ground. There were odd bits of shrapnel, dust and grit flying about, but like all raids it passed. Judging by previous experience we then concluded that we were safe for an hour or two, but five minutes later along came another wave of about thirty bombers. Fortunately there were good shelters nearby and everyone took

to them. Wave after wave of bombers—sometimes ten, sometimes thirty—now followed each other at regular intervals. The ground shook continuously under the rain of bombs; clouds of dust filled the air and settled on the leaves of trees.

At headquarters nearby there were officers and men coming and going, reporting their arrival and that of their units and asking for instructions. In the air raid shelters men were describing to each other what they would like to do to Hitler; veterans of Mons and Gallipoli were agreeing that this was the hottest spot they had ever struck.

Nearby in the street a lorry carrying ammunition was hit, setting off an adjoining lorry, starting a blaze punctuated by explosions. Three "Amps" who had been lying flat on their faces thirty yards away came staggering down the steps of the shelter bleeding from three or four wounds caused by flying metal. Three bombs dropped within twenty yards of the Tea Car (I was not there at the time), but left it uninjured, except for a large piece of concrete crashing through the roof.

After six or seven of these raids, it was obvious that it would be impossible to continue serving, and I decided to get back to Malo for more water and stores. Already the intensity and widespread nature of the bombing had begun to make progress difficult; dozens of fires had been started, and many streets were newly blocked by bomb craters and wreckage. Although it was barely two miles to my centre at Malo I had to stop twice and wait for air raids to pass. More bombs had been dropped in Malo, and, many of the houses being built of wood, the small town was beginning to burn from end to end.

The air raids continued incessantly. During the afternoon more troops appeared on the beach at Malo, having come in from the direction of Belgium. They were hungry, parched, and dog tired. Few, if any, carried any kit, except a rifle and ammunition belt. Some of the men shouldered Bren and anti-tank guns. Many of the men lay out on the wide sandy beach during the air raids, for the Germans were still concentrating upon wrecking the port and buildings of the town. Others sought shelter in the cellars and the ground floors of buildings.

Late in the afternoon I tried to get through to Headquarters in Dunkirk. The bridges were still intact, but the roads were a

maze of bomb craters with here and there the mutilated remains of some of our men. It was impossible to get through, and, after sheltering once or twice, I got back to Malo.

Soon after six o'clock in the evening, there was a surprising lull. Men appeared from doorways, groups collected on the beach. Everybody guessed that the R.A.F. was active some miles away. It was a calm after an inferno. And then we spotted ships coming over the horizon; two or three destroyers, a hospital ship, half-a-dozen tiny trawlers; the Navy had arrived to begin the most amazing evacuation of troops of all time. Men rubbed their eyes unable to believe what they saw. They could not realize what had happened until, from nowhere, sailors and naval officers came along and the word went round for all officers to report.

Officers were told off to take charge of sections of men—for there were many parties without officers. Everyone was told to lie low until the word was given. The sun set and darkness came and with it groups of men began to file in orderly fashion on to the beach. It was a nightmare setting, for two oil dumps were blazing in the docks sending up vast sheets of flame and immense billowing clouds of dark grey smoke; an ammunition dump was going up in a series of cracking explosions, while from end to end Malo and Dunkirk beaches were lit by a line of burning buildings.

The troops were asked to spread themselves evenly over the beach, and this was done without question, many retiring as far back as the promenade. There must have been about 5,000 men on the beach that night.

About 10 p.m. came the sound of 'planes and the cry went round—"Drop flat and stay still." It seemed that we were a perfect target for the whole beach glowed in the light from the burning towns. On the other hand the dense smoke from the numerous fires must have afforded a useful screen. Backwards and forwards the 'planes went. At the edge of the sea small boats began to appear and take off walking wounded and stretcher cases.

Bright magnesium flares were dropped by the enemy, but fortunately they were a long way up the beach, away from the main loading points. A few bombs began to fall—I never

knew what casualties were caused. Slowly, six or eight at a time, the small rowing boats from the trawlers began to take off men. A thin line of troops stood at the edge of the sea; in front of them were one or two sailors with an officer in charge. As a boat appeared the officer shouted—"How many?" When the boatman replied, the requisite number of men waded down the shallow beach fifty to a hundred yards out to the boats. As the number of men at the edge of the sea diminished they were replaced by those from behind, who crawled or wriggled forward on their stomachs. All night long this went on. When dawn came there were still hundreds, probably thousands left on the beach, waiting their turn.

And so the great evacuation began and continued, with the German 'planes making continuous air raids during the day, bombing and machine-gunning the long beaches, bombing and machine-gunning the scores of craft, large and small, as they took off the men. Troops were kept under cover inland until their turn came to move to the beaches. There was tension, it was unpleasant (to put it mildly) there were many killed and injured, many boats were sunk, but through it all there was an orderliness and steadiness that had to be experienced to be appreciated.

For myself, I was able to salve some cigarettes and chocolate after an incendiary bomb struck the hotel where I had unloaded my stores and parked by Tea Cars, and these came in useful for some of the men on the beaches. The Y.M.C.A. had lost centres, lost equipment, lost huts and tents, Tea Cars and stores, had lost more than £35,000 in that way. But nobody had left until he had to, and a grand job of work had been done.

INSIDE ITALY

BY KARL WALTER

OF all the diplomatic tasks in a period of sorely tried diplomacy none can have been more exacting than that of our representatives in Rome. In circumstances outside traditional forms and experiences, they were bound by our interests and by established practice to treat as a neutral a Government which had repudiated that status yet continuously sought all the privileges and profits of it. And, to do this wisely, they had first to unravel the contradictory motives and caprices, and to avoid the deliberate mystifications, of a régime which even without the complication of war presented unusual difficulties.

Seen from outside, especially by those whose intelligence had taken shelter in ideological premises, the prospect seemed clear—Italy was simply Fascist, and we all knew, they assumed, what Fascism means. But seen from inside, instead of a set piece, instead of a “still”, one had to watch an interminable moving picture with a swift and disjointed sequence out of which one knew significant scenes were purposely cut.

The story of diplomatic endurance is for others to tell, but having freely and without responsibility watched the unrolling of events in Rome, I could not begin mine otherwise than with some tribute to those who, less free, and weighted with unceasing cares, stuck to their posts without respite and served British interests in a manner none can more fully appreciate than the outsider observing them in their trenches, as it were, from amidst the entanglements with which they were faced.

Living among Italian workers, and working in harmony if not always in complete understanding with thoughtful and progressive Fascists in whose personal sincerity and civilized motives I still believe, I was under no illusion about the drift toward reaction and war which began to take possession of the

régime after Munich, the nature of which change will be indicated later. As a focus point let me first give some idea of this progressive element in the régime, comparatively unknown yet important enough to-day and likely to be more so to-morrow.

The commonest error is to take the uniformity of totalitarianism at its face value. Thousands of members of the Fascist Party joined it with the greatest diversity of motives. Some for selfish ends, some because otherwise they could take no active part in the political and social life of their country. Others, early or late, went in to support those tendencies in the evolution of the régime which expressed their own convictions—Liberals, Socialists, Syndicalists, Republicans. Much has been achieved by these progressives and proletarians, and more was in sight until obscured by the clouds from the North. Needless to say there was no semblance of any formal unity in a system which allows no such opposition. What united their minds and purposes can best be expressed by giving at some length a passionate outburst provoked in one of them, a person in high official standing, by something one of our political leaders had said—I think it was Mr. Chamberlain in the innocence of his diplomatic heart—about England being indifferent to whatever régime was supported in Italy.

“So anything is good enough for us Italians, is it? That’s what you think of us! It’s just that lack of comprehension, your aloofness and superiority, that makes one despair. For we have always looked to England for understanding, and never in vain until recent years. Garibaldi, Mazzini, Cavour, you understood and aided in their dark days. We took our political ideals from you; you started us on our colonial path; the future spirit and form of our political and economic evolution depends more upon you than any other foreign nation. Yet you flatter Mussolini; and this régime of to-day—do you think we fought alongside of you for this, to live for ever under a police régime, under the thumb of a man who may have been great once but is letting the power we gave him for a very different purpose drift again into the hands of profiteers, pedants and gangsters?

“Do you know any thoughtful Italian, any Fascist even, who is content to go on living like this? Can you conceive

any other end to the régime but a chaos worse than that out of which it was born, unless we develop representative institutions out of this stalemate of a dictatorship fitted only for war or subordination to our age-long enemy? And for this we need English understanding, English support, we who are looking beyond to-morrow. And England talks as if anything was good enough for us.

"You chatter about a New Europe," he went on, "You knew you had to fight Hitler to enable the German people to create the new Germany without which a new Europe is unthinkable. What have you done for Italy? There were better ways of helping us than by fighting us also. But the very people who should have been the first to appreciate progressive elements and help to give them influence and a place of dignity in the state, thrust us back into our totalitarian obscurity by repeating their indiscriminating abuse of everything and everybody labelled Fascist. Your Labour people, I mean. They refused to have anything to do with us at a time when friendly relations with them might have made all the difference, might have made the Anglo-Italian Agreement an agreement backed by our two peoples instead of a sterile diplomatic event. But with a mentality that belongs to the pre-machine-gun age they clung to their notion of a proletarian revolution, friendly only with those Italians who had deserted their own country or those who at home were unwilling or unable to work inside with us for the peaceful changes or the revolution that could only come from within.

"Your Labour people, as well as your Chamberlains and Edens, are much to blame. They could have given us a place of influence in foreign relations such as we had won in class relations at home, when friendly relations with you were desired. Lansbury's visit gave the signal for it. He had vision; his colleagues were blind. And now, with Fascism rivetted on us in its crudest form by their blind hatred of a word we are weary of ourselves, with your leading statesmen deriding us as worthy of nothing better, with our country committed to a desperate gamble in company with a power we detest—now it is too late for agreements, too late for representative institutions peacefully evolved, too late for anything except to hope that out of the

violence of nations we may snatch by violence in the humiliation of defeat that political freedom which has been denied us for eighteen years."

The desire for representative institutions—needless to say alive also in the hearts of non-Fascists—is the common bond between those Fascists who are better designated as the progressive, or the discontented, than as a minority, to avoid the formal implications of the word. Nor is it possible to say that they are, in fact, a minority of the Party. There are no means of ascertaining the opinion of a body which more than ever to-day is simply a disciplinary institution. What can be stated with assurance is that its active membership is a minority, and a small minority, of the whole—those who in all circumstance will "believe, obey, fight". They are the hard core of the party as recently reformed by Muti, which can extend its discipline, by persuasion, by admonition, by threats, by violence if necessary, among the less zealous, the indifferent, the cynical and even disloyal members.

Moreover, by the means indicated and with the aid of an elaborate police system, this fraction dominates a people and gives to Mussolini the assurance that he can pursue his odious German policy to the bitter end without fear of a popular rising. Naturally they are given fresh power by the immediate patriotic sentiment which war engenders. We must not picture a people, or even "progressives", coherently opposed to their Government.

Yet we can, without fear of error, look across the ravaged continent and see millions of Italians on their knees praying for "a just peace", by which they mean just what the Pope means, defeat of the powers of hell that are scourging the world. Nor is this defeatist sentiment limited to the masses who look to their Holy Father for guidance. There is a scattering of "Trotsky" defeatism also. And widespread among all simple people, in the fields and offices and workshops, and among the professional and cultured no less, is a conviction which withstood the months-long barrage of the dictated press, that our cause is their own.

Some reasons why this sentiment has not been effective have been indicated. Two others, for which we are responsible, are worth examination, and must be considered if we want to

understand the deviation of Italy: Sanctions, and our Mediterranean policy. They are closely related.

Opinion was divided among our friends at the outset of the Abyssinian adventure. The non-Fascists had high hopes that we should firmly oppose it, even at the risk of war, by simply closing the Suez Canal. Mussolini's hold on the country was not so strong physically as it is to-day, the Party was not so well disciplined; and there has always been a strong feeling against colonial gambles which would have risen to condemn a major war on that issue. Many believed that it would have meant the end of Mussolini's dictatorship. Our Fascist friends, on the other hand, were just as hopeful that the Hoare-Laval or other compromise would lead to the same end, by bringing Italy into closer relations with France and England whose influence could not fail to be reformist. The pinpricks policy we adopted—I say we, because our leadership is always the gravamen of their complaint—offended everybody. Most Italians think we did our utmost to thwart Italy. Some are silenced when told that sanctions were not prohibitive only because we did not fully apply them; but others reply that they were effective enough to consolidate Mussolini's position; and to this there is no answer.

From this period dated the fatal change in Mussolini's Austrian policy, the Nazi-Fascist collaboration in Spain, the tragic invasion of Italy by German influence, the visit of Hitler and his thousand agents, the foothold of the Gestapo on Italian soil, the Pact of Steel. And, as originators of this course of events, not only Mussolini but thousands of his followers and those who do not follow him, blamed us.

The effects of the German invasion began to be felt after Munich. It was an insidious thing at first, before it was proclaimed by the Pact of Steel. The now well known German method was adapted to the particularly favourable circumstances. One most fruitful field of it was Italian labour headquarters, with which our own Labour people would have nothing to do although the door at that time was open to all and the French were not so inhibited. When the Italian mercenaries came home from Spain and the country was threatened with a serious unemployment problem, the German Labour Front seized the

opportunity to invite Italian headquarters to send as many agricultural and industrial workers as they liked to Germany on very advantageous terms. I happened to meet the chief German agent about that time—his office was already in Italian labour headquarters.

"Send us your two million English unemployed, too," he said. "We can use them all." He went about criticizing "the sloppy Italian way" of doing things. "But we'll soon teach them," he said. He became so objectionable at headquarters that an order was issued for his expulsion from Italy. Other incidents show that there was some resistance to the invasion. A proposal for the amalgamation of the Italian and German labour propaganda was turned down by the Italians. Even after the war began, when Ley applied for 50,000 Italian workers to replace those returning home, the demand was at first refused; it was only granted in April.

On the other hand, Italy was systematically flooded with German tourists, by the trainload. Among them, 3,000 visited the nearest Riviera resort to the French frontier in a succession of special trains up to within a few weeks of the war, well equipped with maps and personal guides and their accommodation arranged by the Italian authorities. What spare money they had they spent on extra food, hungrily, some of them exchanging cameras and field-glasses for butter and fruit to take home. The least unfriendly comment made by the Italians of the district was, "Ah, if only they were English!" Much more outspoken comment was to be heard any day and in full view of the memorial stone set up in every Italian town to commemorate the "iniquitous sanctions".

Our friends could have weathered the odium of sanctions and possibly made effective that heartfelt expression of preference for us, had we been able to formulate a conciliatory Mediterranean policy. We never stated one except in the most vague terms. We accepted none too graciously Mussolini's contention that the Mediterranean for us is a *via*, for Italy, *vita*. We did not follow that up, although we knew that Italy was not satisfied with the *status quo* of the Agreement, although we knew how vain it was to pretend that Italy's apprehension about the Suez Canal, vital channel of her acknowledged imperial

responsibilities, ought to be at rest for ever simply because we had not closed it against her rape of that empire. Yet Mussolini was only putting in his pithy way, so far as our positive interests were concerned, what was memorably said by a great Conservative more than half a century ago.

“ You will be told that Egypt is the high road to India and that Britain must hold it at all costs. This is a terrible and widespread delusion. . . . Egypt is not the high road to India. The Suez Canal is a commercial route to India, and a good route, too, in time of peace ; but it never was, and never could be, a military route for Great Britain in time of war. In time of war there are no well-marked high roads to and fro across the British Empire. The path of Britain is upon the ocean, her ways lie upon the deep ; and you should avoid as the greatest danger any reliance on transcontinental communications where at any time you may have to encounter gigantic military hosts.”

That was Lord Randolph Churchill's view in 1883. Mr. Churchill, who gave it immortality in the biography, had nothing to do with framing policies the outcome of which he has been called upon to shoulder. It may seem idle to-day—since hold Egypt now we must—to speculate whether he could have shown Mussolini that we had not abandoned the basis of his father's policy, nor grafted upon it a purely obstructive design against Italy. Had we been able to do so, had we ever suggested, for instance, bringing France and Egypt into conference to transform our hold upon the Canal into a condominium, from which none more willingly than Italy would have excluded Germany, we should have stolen from Mussolini the one great argument which has made his war policy formidable at home. Indeed, that policy never would have taken shape. Just as he had no original intention to annex the whole of Abyssinia, no more had he a year ago any thought of consolidating his empire by the conquest of Egypt and the Sudan. When we speak of his inflated ambitions let us remember the process of that inflation and our part in it, and that any collaboration of Italy and the democracies, in Egypt or elsewhere, would have been infinitely more dangerous to the evil spirit of dictatorship than to us.

Everything else is now secondary to him, including Gibraltar. Tunis would fall into his hands, with Egypt won. Nice, Savoy, Corsica, Jibuti, bits of the Balkans, these are bagatelles.

"If we do not hold Egypt at the end of the war, Hitler will not give it us, he will give us nothing," I was told by an ardent believer in totalitarian victory.

Defeat, Mussolini certainly will not survive; he stands or falls by his inflated ambition. The odds against him abroad grow with every day of our endurance; we may add one other to those already set against him at home: he no longer commands the respect won by the subordination of selfish interests and indulgences to public service. There has been an attempt in these months to revive the mystic "school" of Fascism, "*Mistica Fascista*", reconsecrating the Milan *covo*, the original den or lair of the god. But you cannot make a god of an elderly gentleman snatching at his passing youth; and with his example before them, the youth of Italy are turning to older gods, resuming an ancient and more pleasurable worship. And this also will be a factor in what must be endured. The "great" period of Fascism lies in the past.

That is not to say that the fruits of that period are all rotten. Many beneficial social institutions still stand, though perverted by the new German spirit in them. The Italian Navy has been made a formidable weapon, technically and morally. It took the British Navy for its model in many things, and markedly those of the spirit; the highest ambition of its officers was "to play the best team". The air force was not so homogeneous. Strenuous efforts have been made to bring it up to date in equipment and tactics, especially by continual desert exercises. But the limits of Italian resources are known, and the German contribution was not expected to be great, even before her spectacular losses in war.

The pick of the army has been in Africa, for some time, shrouded in the mystery of its desert manœuvres, and no men on leave to tell the tale. So little attention was being paid to the armies of the North that it seemed unlikely any strenuous performance could be designed for them. To an amateur eye, a defensive rôle seemed indicated by the concentration on frontier fortifications, the siting of heavy guns in positions

closed by mountains to any advance with them, and the accumulation of heavy shell near other gun emplacements far behind the main line. There was extreme confusion in all branches when this French frontier was first manned, so much that more than one young soldier remarked, "Now I know what happened at Caporetto!" There have been months to put this right, but months of demoralizing idleness. Boredom, broken only by morning parade and intermittent exercises, aggravated by insufficient food and the most meagre pay, was scarcely relieved by a relaxation of discipline unheard of even in regiments in which it is notoriously lax. By French or English standards the fighting morale of the armies of the Northwest would have been deemed catastrophic, faced by an enemy even a fraction of their numerical strength.

On the Yugoslav frontier also the greatest attention had been given to fortifications, and this seemed to fit in with the theory of inner Fascist circles that Mussolini was "sincere" in his efforts to preserve peace in the Balkans. He might make another Poland of them, it was said, by agreement with Germany and Russia, but only events would force him to fight for that; otherwise he would concentrate on the one "worthy" prize, Egypt.

And now, with the news of his terrible decision coming through even as these closing lines are being written, there seems little to add or to amend. My thoughts are with our friends in that dear country, Italy, with those who will be praying for our success and for the downfall of the tyrant who has brought them to bitter shame and humiliation. And I know that in the end, in Italy as elsewhere, the rightness of our cause will help us.

(Mr. Karl Walter lived in Italy and worked, as a journalist, in close contact with the Fascist régime from 1934 until the end of May, 1940)

ITALY'S PART IN THE WAR

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR CHARLES GWYNN

MUSSOLINI like Hitler has evidently gambled on a short war ; and it is perhaps a sign of Germany's doubts as to whether quick decisive results are obtainable that she has persuaded Italy to make the plunge.

While Italy remained a non-belligerent the assistance her attitude gave Germany was often of first importance. It compelled France to retain a substantial force in the south, and it was one of the main reasons why neither Britain nor France could reduce the size of their army in the Middle East. Naturally too it greatly affected the dispositions of the allied naval and air forces. Equally serious was the effect on the efficiency of the blockade ; for in addition to the opportunity Italy was given to build up reserves, reduced by the Abyssinian war and her participation in the Spanish war, many concessions were made in the attempt to conciliate Mussolini. There can be no doubt that Germany benefited by the loophole thus created.

With so many advantages accruing from Italy's non-belligerent attitude one may reasonably speculate as to whether her entry into the war will strengthen the Axis powers to any considerable extent ; for many of the advantages of non-belligerency will obviously be lost. The loophole in the blockade has been closed, the allied forces, naval, military and air, which for so many months have been lying idle, are now free to come into action ; Mussolini's reserve supplies will be tapped and the resources of the Balkan neutrals, on which Germany so much relies, will to an increasing extent be shared with Italy.

How far psychological factors will affect the situation one cannot say definitely, but clearly the Italian people, war weary as the result of Mussolini's Abyssinian and Spanish enterprises, were well satisfied to remain non-belligerent. They are not likely to display enthusiasm for another war—one moreover in which their own country and their colonies cannot escape

damage. They have grievances against Britain over her sanctions policy in the Abyssinian affair and in connection with the blockade; but they do not love Germany and have no desire to be her catspaw. They may share Mussolini's ambitions to create a new Roman empire, but one may doubt whether their ambitions are deep-rooted or confident except in the younger generation. The immediate intensification of hardships and the loss of shipping and many sources of wealth are bound to come as a blow to an important section of the community.

What contribution can Italy make towards the rapid and decisive victory Germany and now Italy are striving to achieve? The possibility that Italian troops may be transferred to Germany has obviously to be considered. It is hardly likely that the German General Staff would welcome the direct co-operation of Italian troops in their main operations. It would introduce complications of command, of lines of supply and of language, from which allied armies always suffer. Moreover, the German General Staff has no great confidence in the reliability of Italian troops. It is more probable that Italian divisions might be used to release German formations at present retained to exercise pressure on Rumania and on the Balkans generally. She might also accept mechanized troops should her own mechanized resources eventually give out. This, however, seems less probable because Italian tanks are in the main of obsolescent and inferior design. Moreover, they are likely to be needed in Libya where mechanized formations are already stationed and where they are essential to the conduct of desert operations.

As regards the part Italy's colonies will take, the essential factor is their isolation. Sea communication between Libya and Italy is precarious and in the case of her East African possessions non-existent. Air co-operation in any land operations undertaken from Italian overseas possessions is, owing to the nature of the physical characteristics of the countries, of special importance. Air reinforcement can to a greater or less extent be sent to them depending on their respective remoteness but they must depend on accumulated reserves of oil owing to lack of sea communication to maintain supply.

Italy we believe has an army of some 200,000 men in Libya with a large mechanized component and the possibility of powerful air co-operation. This force constitutes a threat to Egypt in the east and to Tunisia in the west. But in both directions the Allies have taken extensive defence precautions and have adequate forces to meet attack. They are also capable of taking counter offensive action especially should the Italian force concentrate its attack on one flank.

In Abyssinia the situation is different. Obviously if Italy attempted offensive action there it would have no effect on the main issue, but it might have nuisance value and we must assume that neither of the allies maintain strong forces for the defence of their territories which adjoin the block of Italian East Africa. There are probably some 60,000 Italian white troops in the country and a larger number of coloured troops of different races—Libyan Arabs, Somalis and Abyssinians, including Eritreans—of varying degrees of reliability. The whole must constitute a large army but the greater part of it must be required for the internal security of Abyssinia where disaffection is still seething.

The most obvious objective for Italian offensive action would be French and British Somaliland. Possession of Jibuti has been for long an Italian ambition and, as the port serves the only railway into the heart of Abyssinia, it would be of great value for the entry of supplies carried by Japanese shipping. The Italian ports of Massawa, serving by a short railway into Eritrea, and Assab, serving a motor road to Addis Ababa, are of less value as they both lie on the Red Sea coast and are therefore affected by the blockade exercised from Aden.

For an attack on Jibuti and Berbera, the British Somali port, the Italians would have the advantage of using the railway from Addis Ababa and the motor road from Berbera to Harar. This would relieve them of much of the difficulty of supplying their forces in the semi-desert coastal region.

The possibility of raids into Kenya Colony and into the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan cannot be ignored. They would, however, have many difficulties to overcome if attempted on any considerable scale. There would, in the first instance, be the difficulty of assembling and moving the force to the frontier

regions, especially during the summer months which on the Abyssinian plateau are the rainy season. That difficulty might in some measure be relieved if the motor roads, on which the Italians have worked hard, have reached the frontier. Where roads and bridges have not been constructed, mechanical transport cannot be used during the rains and movement of any sort is difficult. From the frontiers, which in most places correspond with the escarp of the Abyssinian plateau, raiding forces would have to traverse long distances of semi-desert plain before reaching any objective of importance. Local supplies would be unobtainable and water supply precarious. Roads in Kenya and the Sudan do not yet, I believe, connect with those constructed by the Italians and mechanical transport could not be relied on even if petrol supplies could be maintained. Generally speaking British defending forces would be much better served by road and railway communications. Moreover, in the Sudan the waterways of the Nile and the Sobat rivers, for a considerable part of the year, are valuable lines of communication. The British forces possess steamers whereas the Italians would have no boats of any sort.

The chief advantage held by the British is that whereas the native population in our territory is loyal that in Italian territory, if provided with arms, would be a constant source of danger to our enemy.

THE COUNTRY WARDEN

BY JOSEPH BRADDOCK

EXTRME beauty of the night sky. The sky has been swept, washed clean of cloud by the wind and the day's rain. Now it is clear. There is no wind. But at five hundred feet, looking out over the blacked-out countryside from the hill's crown of pine trees, a big sougning sound comes suddenly from nowhere. Threatening. Crunch of our steps on the shiny road. The Milky Way arches broadly across the country. The bigger stars and planets have the brightness, the detached globularity of balls on a Christmas tree. There are myriads of stars of varying sizes and intensity from crystal-clear to faint luminous powder ; they are millions of light-years away. The stars are like seeds sown in the sky—who knows—of happier worlds than this, but they cannot be more beautiful. A beam from the earth, a searchlight stabs the whole darkness, swings over, peers, examines for death-birds, is extinguished.

It seems fantastic to be fitting gas-masks under the low cottage rafters. The room is lit by the stub of a candle stuck in a bottle ; it is crammed with crockery and nick-nacks. Onions hang from the oak beams. The evening meal has not yet been cleared away. We fit the labourer and his wife ; but we leave the old lady's ninety years alone, for she sits lapped in a shawl by the wood fire, a wisp of white hair and shrunken flesh, removed from our trouble.

Outside, darkness again ; then the stars. A fox gives sharp, wild mating cries ; eerie. Our steps on the gravel.

"Do you know the stars ? "

He points to the cluster of the Pleiades. "Used to call it the butcher's block when I was a boy in Bedfordshire."

* * * * *

There is a contrast in the interiors of these cottages where the wardens go to examine gas-masks. Identical in size and

convenience the sitting-room of one will be revoltingly squalid while next door will be cosy and inviting, clean as a washed stone.

In 'the pig-sty' the husband, a labourer, has more than a touch of 'silly Sussex'. He says he feels "snouty". He is not nice to handle in fitting his mask—still he is a high-spirited wag and can see a joke. His woman is about as pleasant as a toothless, scrawny vulture. She is masticating something that looks like congealed bacon fat. Her eyes are drink-sodden.

In 'the Englishman's home' the wife is as buxom and wholesome as Vermeer's 'Maid-servant Pouring Milk'. In a fat, rosy face the eyes are beads, brown, alight. A flowered chintz apron undulates over her fruitful breasts. The straps slip easily across her newly washed hair. Her husband is not in. "I'll run and fetch him," she says. "He's down at the shop *jawing*."

* * * * *

The only cantankerous one is a high light in the village. I had upset him a few nights previously by pointing out that he had a yellow window showing. "One candle-power!" he had said. "Yes, but it's the whole window."

To-night the light is still showing. The head warden knocks on the door of the cottage. Sound of a body lumbering to open the door. "Hullo, George, can we see your gas-mask? You've got a light showing."

The burly form glares sourly. "One-candle-power. An' 'ow about that light over there quarter of a mile away? You want to look to that."

"Ah, that's only a crack."

"I don't know as I shall show you me gas-mask."

"All right—we can't make you. But better get your window covered."

Impression of irate bushy eyebrows. "I ain't so windy as some people."

"What's made you twisty, George? Get out of bed on the wrong side, eh?"

"I ain't windy I tell you. Some of you young chaps 'ud do well to git out to France. One candle-power!"

* * * * *

A little smiling woman who seems to find our presence very funny. We have come back to try and persuade her, finally, to have a gas-mask, and at the same time to see that her son's mask fits properly. The son slumps on a wooden chair, a shapeless sawney youth with a big red, naked face. His lower lip droops like a baby's. As the head warden holds a card in front of the container and tells the boy to "breathe in", I catch the mother's eye, bright as a robin's. She has not moved. She is standing rigid, arms akimbo, smiling at and not with us.

"Won't you change your mind and have a mask, Mrs. Pagham?" I ask her. "It's a present from the Government."

"No, thank you." She is smiling.

I continue the jocularity. "It's about the only thing in this life you'll get free," I urge.

She is smiling as though with contemptuous amusement, and yet, somehow, harder. "There's plenty more things free," she says.

"Come now, you ought to have one you know."

"Yes, you ought," echoes the head warden.

"No, *thank* you." The robin's eye has become flinty. She is still smiling.

"But why won't you?"

"Because I trusts in the Good Master."

The head warden regards her with the patience of an ex-policeman. "Quite right," I reply, "but don't you remember what Oliver Cromwell told his troops before the day of battle? Trust in God and keep your powder dry. Now Cromwell was a religious man."

"That's it," says the head warden.

The woman smiles and smiles. "No, thank you, I don't want the horrid thing," she says, her voice rising.

"We won't make you try it on. We can just leave it in the hall. You will be glad of it if the raids come."

The woman's hand goes to the door-handle. She throws back her head and laughs at us heartily, with real amusement straight from her stomach. "Oh dear me, can't you understand? You are wasting your time. I've told you, I trusts in the Kind Master." Now she is smiling again. She opens the door and says politely "Good evening", as we pass out.

"Crank," says my companion. "Can't do nothing."

But, as we grope for a minute in the darkness, I begin to wonder who is the madder in this crazy world—she or us?

* * * *

The black-out has at least given us back the night sky. Walking home through several miles of darkness we have leisure to think about the constant references to daylight and darkness, to the night sky, to the moon and the stars in Shakespeare. There is in the plays the frequent antithesis of 'fair daylight' to 'black night'.

'Good morrow, masters; put your torches out.'

I smile as I walk through 'the collied night' up a hill, envying Shakespeare because he escaped electric torches and air-raid wardens. But over the hill, now as then, 'the floor of heaven is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold'; it is the same 'majestical roof fretted with golden fire'—'Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light', if not as light as we could wish. There, marches the splendid constellation of Orion, the dog-star at his heel. The skies are still 'painted with unnumbered sparks'. There tilts the Bear, the pointers leading the eye as ever to

'the northern star,
Of whose true-fixt and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.'

Ah, we are a generation of little Hamlets! Above, the Dictator speaks, but at least it is a dictator with a claim to nobility. We top the hill, and a biting wind cuts us; which sets me thinking of another poet.

'Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art.'

I think that night is the best time for contemplating this war, for the shame of it lies on us all. We are imbroiled in 'the common muck of the world'.

* * * *

At the cross-roads the other warden goes his way, I mine. I am alone with the stars. There is a sinister soughing from a row of black fir-trees. The telegraph wires are dull ropes against night's brilliants. Now I look down. How bright is the starshine—it is Jupiter—in a puddle.

AMERICAN WHITE PAPER

BY PROFESSOR R. B. MOWAT

THE British public has never had a very clear conception of American foreign policy. The British are convinced that they have the sympathy of the American people. They believe that the American Government and people is disposed to be helpful within the limits of neutrality. Sympathy is one of the intangibles which help to shape victory or defeat when the tangible forces on each side are in balance. A people fighting for their existence or at any rate for their "way of life"—and incidentally for the way of life of all free peoples—is apt to say, sometimes with irritation, "Sympathy is not enough". If there is any irritation, it is unreasonable and due to lack of understanding on the part of individual British men and women. A timely publication, called the *American White Paper**, gives to all who can read the opportunity of understanding.

This is not an official "white paper". It is the work of two young Washington journalists who are obviously extremely well informed, and who have made a very careful documentation of Mr. Roosevelt's policy, not only from published but also, it appears, from unpublished sources. The book is not propaganda, that is to say it is not argument, is not tendentiously biassed. It is a record of fact that is therefore the most convincing kind of writing.

Like the policy of every state, United States policy is determined by history. The American Revolution, which is the origin of the United States, was made in order to detach the Americans from the politics of Europe. They found their way of life—based on detachment from European politics—satisfying. Their great early leaders, Washington and Jefferson, solemnly advised them, in words which have become tradition and principle, not to depart from this detachment. President

*By Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner (Simon and Schuster N.Y. 1940).

Monroe's Message to Congress, December 2, 1823, explicit and forcible in language and argument, erected "non-intervention" into a doctrine. No politician, party, administration, could possibly ignore or resist this doctrine, tradition, habit of the American public. It is within the limits inexorably set by these things that the most enlightened statesmen's policy must operate. President Wilson's mistake, his almost irretrievable mistake, was in thinking that he could enter into long-term commitments without taking account of the limits imposed by the tradition and habit determining American policy.

Mr. Roosevelt's dilemma has been almost insoluble. He has for years known as much about the European situation as any European statesman. He has as keen an appreciation of the issues at stake, for Europe, for America, for the world. He has the instinct, the experience, the judgment of statesmanship and he has laboured—as the record indicates—literally night and day, to avert the impending catastrophe. He has laboured with inexhaustible patience, faith, courage and skill. And all the time he has had to operate within the limits of neutrality, non-intervention, isolation, of an age-long political "flight from Europe".

Mr. Roosevelt's dilemma in these last five years is very simply explained in the White Paper. Through the cables and the telephones he was constantly in touch with the European situation, and was speaking over the wires with the American ambassadors in European capitals. "Almost daily he asked Bullitt and Kennedy, Hugh Wilson in Berlin and William Phillips in Rome, *Is there anything we can do to help?* Regularly the answer came back, *Not without making some commitment.*" Now, to make a commitment was just precisely what the President could not do. Accordingly, he was left with just one line of action, of inconceivable difficulty, to undertake and maintain a "peace-offensive" by persuasion, nothing but persuasion. "The President, sitting in his oval office among the ship pictures, devouring cables, directing all activity between incessant telephone calls to Europe, fumed sometimes at the necessity for caution. . . . At the State Department, the meetings in Hull's room never ceased. From early morning until late evening, the Department's leading men talked over

the incoming dispatches and asked themselves the same baffling question the President asked his ambassadors. Berle called them *the death watch over Europe.*"

Adolph A. Berle Jr., is Assistant Secretary of State, apparently the chief drafter of messages and formulæ in the Department. At the head of the Department is Secretary of State Hull. Sumner Welles is Under Secretary of State. To these the cables go first, after being decoded and mimeographed, "then upstairs, where the hardworking, quietly professional career men, Jay Pierrepont Moffatt and James Clement Dunn, preside over the Western European division. . . . The cables are the stimuli, American policy is the response that these stimuli produce". Senators, however, who under the constitution have the last word on American commitments, do not read the cables. In a meeting which the President and Mr. Hull arranged with leading Senators at the White House, the late Mr. Borah, chief of the isolationists, said to the Secretary of State: "So far as the reports in your Department are concerned, I wouldn't be bound by them. I have my own sources of information which I have provided for myself, and on several occasions I've found them more reliable than the State Department."

Within the limits imposed by "do-nothingism" the President pursued his peace-offensive with marvellous energy, hope (against hope), persistence. He gave all his support to the Chamberlain-Daladier effort to avert war in September, 1938. "Mere verbal intervention in other countries' affairs has never been held inconsistent with do-nothingism." Before Tuesday, September 27, 1938, the President had already sent messages to the European Powers, but without effect and by that date "war seemed as imminent as ever". It was then that the President determined to send a personal message to Signor Mussolini urging him to increase his pressure for peace, and another message to Hitler. The President, Hull, Welles and Berle sat all through the afternoon and evening of September 29, working on the drafts, calling Bullitt and Kennedy over the Atlantic telephone. "As the President was revising the answer to Hitler, a report came in that the Germans might march in the night, forcing a war to no purpose. For a moment the President showed real anger. But the report was still speculative, and

there was no time to lose. Doubtful points were rapidly crossed out ; phrases were carefully pruned which might make the two messages anything but direct appeals for peace. By 9 p.m. Hull, who was exhausted, was able to go home. Half-an-hour later the President had edited and signed both papers. The late summer evening was just beginning to show when Welles and Berle crossed the narrow street dividing the White House from the Department, to go again to the cable room and watch hopeful words being flashed across the ocean." If there are still any Americans who "blame" Chamberlain and Daladier for Munich they are singularly misinformed.

Down to the opening of the "Second World War" the President and Mr. Hull have conducted their "peace-offensive" on the base of two positive proposals for reducing tension and solving the European crisis. These proposals were always the same : reduction of tariffs and reduction of armaments. The European democracies obviously could accept these proposals, but Nazi Germany, being a great military autarchy, would not. Thus the basic principles of Mr. Roosevelt's peace-offensive were just precisely the antithesis of Nazi principles, for, as Mr. Walter Lippmann has remarked, totalitarian Government *must* keep its citizens on war economy otherwise it will cease to exist. So that approach had no success. Mr. Hull succeeded in negotiating twenty-one trade agreements, but never one with Germany.

Munich averted war in September, 1938, but a few weeks more showed that to regard it as a long-term peace settlement was pure illusion. The President quickly apprehended the renewed danger of war and the continued menace not to Europe alone but to the United States. "A world war obviously impended, and even our two protecting oceans could not isolate us from its after effects. . . . To the President, Hull and Welles, our interest seemed clear. We must prevent war if possible, and if war proved inevitable, we must do our best to assure victory for the other democracies."

There was no doubt about what we had to do ; the question was how to do it. We had the power to do anything. Great, rich enough, strong enough, we might easily substitute a Pax Americana for the seemingly crumbling Pax Britannica under which we and the world had known reasonable comfort for so long. Or, safe at home behind our oceans, we

might bolster the British and French with our naval and air power. Or, without risking a war, we might throw our vast industrial resources into the balance. Merely by signing a scrap of paper committing ourselves to one of these courses we might perhaps keep the peace, and for so doing exact a splendid price from the democracies of Europe. But, while we had the power, our people continued to lack the will. Clear though our interests seemed, the President dared not assert our influence, utter a threat, or offer a commitment, for fear of the political consequences. It was with this dilemma in mind that he and Hull and Welles reached careful conclusions in both the main fields of European and Western Hemisphere affairs.

As far as concerned the Western Hemisphere (North and South America), the President's problem was fairly simple. There was already a "North-South Axis". It was not difficult to arrange for the meeting of a Pan-American Conference which took place at Lima in December, 1938, and produced the "Declaration of Lima" (an all-American solidarity).

As regards Europe, the President's problem remained as baffling as ever. A peace-offensive "short of war" (absolutely and honestly short of war) was something not much good against a Hitler Government. The most promising, indeed the only promising, approach was in regard to the Neutrality Act. This placed an embargo, in the event of foreign war, on the export of American munitions to any belligerent. The embargo was an important item in Hitler's strategy. Without the repeal of the Neutrality Act the President's peace offensive would be just trifling, but repeal could make it mean something, something that Hitler and his advisers could understand. In November, 1938, the President, Hull and Welles decided to attempt repeal in the next session of Congress. Yet they realized that even this was, though important, not a very big thing, it did not amount to a really strong and solid peace-offensive, it was, at best, *Ersatz*. The peace-offensive—the effort to cow Hitler into peacefulness on which the President, Hull and Welles had also decided in their talks after Munich—was strictly an ersatz policy in which every move had to be carefully calculated for maximum effect in Germany and minimum effect in the still isolationist United States.

To obtain a repeal of the Neutrality Act required time and much labour, preparation, conferences with Senators and Congressmen. Meantime a minor but possibly not wholly ineffective day-to-day peace-offensive could be kept up in

Berlin : " Hugh Wilson was instructed to seize every informal opportunity to instil in the mind of the Wilhelmstrasse the thought that further German aggression would cause the gravest repercussions in the United States. Bullitt in Paris, Kennedy in London, and other American envoys in other capitals were always ready with the same opinion for any German ear. In Washington, State Department officials repeatedly warned members of the German embassy staff against miscalculating this country's future course. Thus, without any formal steps being taken, the Wilhelmstrasse was constantly being worked upon to accept the desired view."

The Wilhelmstrasse, however, had been often privately worked upon before this, without any obvious result. Accordingly, the President seized any opportunity that presented itself for some public and striking demonstration of his attitude. When in November, 1938, the murder by a Jew of an attaché of the German embassy in Paris produced more than usually frightful proceedings in Germany against the Jews, Mr. Roosevelt recalled the American ambassador from Berlin. Further, on November 15, he issued a statement : " I myself could scarcely believe that such things could occur in a twentieth century civilization." A month later Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, a member of Mr. Roosevelt's Cabinet, made " one of his blustering anti-Nazi speeches ". The German *chargé d'affaires* (the Nazi Government had withdrawn its ambassador after Mr. Roosevelt withdrew his from Berlin) went to the State Department to protest. He was received by Mr. Welles who " let go in his most severe and icy style—Protest emphatically rejected. In many decades the public opinion of the United States has not been so shocked and confounded as by recent events in Germany ".

On January 3, 1939, the President met Congress and delivered his message about the Neutrality Act.

Words may be futile, but war is not the only means of commanding a decent respect for the opinions of mankind. There are many methods short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the sentiments of our people. At the very least, we can and should avoid any action, or lack of action, which will encourage or assist an aggressor.

There followed long and arduous domestic negotiations and it was

not until the Second World War had actually broken out that public opinion was sufficiently stirred and educated to permit the repeal bill to be carried through the Legislature, in October, 1939; and even then the *cash and carry* clause had to be incorporated to meet the isolationists.

Sometimes, on one occasion at least, the President's words at conference were misunderstood. In February, 1939, he spoke in private to the Military Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. He has always made clear his view that the survival of European democracy is an American interest. To the Military Affairs Committee he roundly declared: "That is why the safety of the Rhine frontier does necessarily interest us." This went out somehow to the public as a report or rumour that the President had declared America's frontier to be on the Rhine. Even the correct statement had outraged the isolationists.

The German seizure of Czechoslovakia showed to the President and his advisers how hampered they were by the limits of their peace-offensive. "Ersatz was not enough." Yet they could do nothing. In private "Welles called the seizure of Prague *the first unshaded instance of open thievery*, and rounded off the magnificently typical phrase by confessing to the President that it almost made him sick to be unable to give public vent to his feelings". The President and State Department at once seized such weapons—weak enough—as were available. They abrogated the trade-agreement with Czechoslovakia, now that it was in the hands of the Germans, and they arranged with the Treasury and the Justice Department to block the Czech money-balances. On April 14 (1939) the President sent a masterly message to Mussolini and Hitler asking for an explicit assurance that they would not attack any one of thirty-one countries which he mentioned by name—including Great Britain, France, Norway, Sweden, Holland and Belgium. He had to wait for answers. Mussolini's came first, an unfinished sentence in a speech. Hitler's, delayed until the end of April, was a long oration to the Reichstag attacking the President. The President conveyed to the Italian ambassador and to the German *chargé d'affaires* that a breach of good manners had been committed by their Governments in failing to make a written reply to a written communication. "Unfortunately

polite deportment was not a pre-occupation of the dictatorships."

As the impending catastrophe came nearer the White House—State Department group could do little more than watch. The Neutrality Bill was still on the statute-book; "with the embargo unrepealed, this country's voice had little authority". Yet a final plea for peace seemed "a necessary gesture". Between August 1 and 5 (1939), however, the German ambassador at Moscow informed Molotov that Hitler was ready to negotiate a Russo-German pact. The State Department had knowledge of this and informed the President who was on holiday at Hyde Park. In a few days he was due to go for a short sea-trip on the cruiser Tuscaloosa. On August 12, Sumner Welles rang up Hyde Park. "Mr. President," he said, "war is probably a matter of a week or ten days." Mr. Roosevelt, who held that his advisers usually over-estimated the speed of events, concluded that he would have time for a fortnight's rest at sea. "I'll go," he replied to Welles, "but I'll arrange to be always on call."

On August 21 the Russo-German pact was announced in Berlin. The President hurried back to Washington and decided to send one message to the King of Italy, and two "last chance" messages to Hitler and Poland's President Moscicki, urging them to use every resource of negotiation to compose their differences. The message to the King of Italy was sent on August 23, those to Hitler and Moscicki on August 24. Moscicki at once answered, declaring complete readiness to negotiate all questions between Poland and Germany. Hull, Welles and Berle went over with this answer to the White House. All realized that now only one man had the power to decide the future of the world. They agreed to communicate Moscicki's answer to Hitler, suggesting that if he too would negotiate, all might yet be well. The President, however, expressed what was really in their minds when he declared: "At any rate this puts the issue squarely up to Germany, which no one bothered to do in 1914." On August 28, Berle noted in his diary: *The last couple of days have produced exactly the sensation you might have waiting for a jury to bring in a verdict on the life or death of about 10,000,000 people.* "Then early in the morning of September 1, the one-man jury's verdict was brought in."

Since the opening of hostilities in Europe the President

has not abandoned a policy which is admittedly aimed at assisting the democracies by means short of war. His first public address after the outbreak of war reversed Wilson's famous plea of 1914 for neutrality in thought: "This nation will remain a neutral nation," Mr. Roosevelt declared, "but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts." He has succeeded in bringing about the repeal of the arms embargo, thus enabling the Allies to purchase large numbers of much-needed aeroplanes. He has called the attention of his people and of the world to the facts of naked aggression on Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium. When the repeal of the embargo was going through Congress there were many arguments for repeal, but none of them mentioned the core of the matter, that repeal would help the British and French. Senator Warren R. Austin of Vermont, a Republican, remarked to the President: "If you want my opinion, I think we should indicate our purpose to support the democracies, and legislate with that in mind." To this the President answered: "I'm glad to hear you say that, but I can't say it myself."

Since that time American opinion has swung further in favour of the allies. The terrible thrust into France affected Americans profoundly. The entry of the Italians into the war on June 10 at the most agonizing moment for France aroused Mr. Roosevelt to the plainest speaking. On the same day, speaking at Charlottesville, Virginia, the President said:

The people and Government of the United States have seen with the utmost, urgent, and grave disquiet the decision of the Italian Government to engage in the hostilities now raging in Europe. . . . The sympathies of the American republics lie with those nations which are giving their life-blood in combat against the gods of force and hate. . . . We will extend to the opponents of force the material resources of this nation, and at the same time we will harness and speed up the use of those resources in order that we ourselves in the Americas may have equipment and training equal to the task of any emergency. All roads leading to the accomplishment of these objectives must be kept clear of obstructions. We will not slow down or make any detour. The signs and signals call for speed—full speed ahead.

CHINA'S THREE YEARS OF WAR

By O. M. GREEN

AS the wounded snake drags its slow length along, so the war in China drags on with no visible prospect of ever coming to an end. It will be three years on July 7 since the war began with the clash at Marco Polo Bridge outside Peking. Japan has seized China's chief towns and ports, most of her railways and the essential parts of her best rivers. But she is like a fly on a flypaper, she cannot get on or get out, there is nowhere where she can strike a decisive military blow, and she dares not even move very far from the points she has occupied except in great force, for the country between is still controlled by the Chinese Government and infested with agile and elusive guerrillas.

As one looks back on the past year and a half it seems extraordinary that the Japanese with all their great advantage in training and equipment should have accomplished so little since they captured Hankow and Canton in October, 1938. The battle front now roughly follows a diagonal from north-west to south-east, taking in a portion of the Peking-Hankow, Hankow-Canton railways, only parts of which are in Japanese hands, and all their efforts to cross that line have failed.

They have repeatedly, but vainly, tried to cross the Yellow River where it bends round southern Shansi, in order to cut the Chinese communications with Russia at Sianfu, scene of the famous kidnapping of General Chiang Kai-shek. About this time last year they also tried to drive across country from Hankow to Ichang, short-circuiting the southward bend of the Yangtze between these points, and again they were repulsed with considerable loss. Their most notable success was the capture last November of Nanning, 100 miles from the extreme south-east coast of China. This was a serious loss for the Chinese as Nanning commands the road into Indo-China by

which they drew supplies from abroad. But when the Japanese tried to push on farther they were trapped by the Chinese at a place called Pingyang, some 40 miles north-east of Nanning and suffered a very bad defeat. It is quite on the cards that the Chinese may cut their enemy's communications between Nanning and the sea.

Pingyang is by no means the only Chinese victory in recent months. Last autumn the Japanese launched two big forces from different directions with the object of taking Changsha in southern Central China, which would have given them command of the Canton-Hankow railway. It was on Changsha's proud walls that the last waves of the Taiping Rebellion broke and were spent. The Chinese withdrew into the mountains, allowed the Japanese almost to reach the city, and then fell upon their rear and cut them up badly.

On the second occasion, last February, the Japanese invaded western Inner Mongolia, in order to break the power of the 8th Route (ex-Communist) Army, whose guerrillas are a continual thorn in their side in North China, and took the historic market town of Wuyuan, on the north bank of the Yellow River. A month later the Chinese, led by one of their ablest soldiers, General Fu Tso-yi, counter-attacked, retook Wuyuan together with an important mountain pass 40 miles to the east, and ambushed and slew the Japanese Commander, General Misogawa.

From this brief survey of the past year and a half's operations one thing stands out clearly, namely that the Chinese are fighting better and better. The loss of direct communications with the sea has affected their hitting powers less than might have been expected. Scattered all over west and south-west China they have numerous small arsenals, cleverly camouflaged and none so big that its destruction by aeroplanes would be irreparable, which turn out quantities of rifles and hand-grenades, much favoured by the Chinese soldier. The latter, too, is an individualist. He is not worried by the death of his leader nor by finding himself isolated and thrown on his own resources. The art of "making do," from cooking an elaborate dinner on a charcoal stove when the kitchen range suddenly breaks down to patching up a motor-car with soda-water wire and some

bits of leather, is instinct in every Chinese, and it is now helping him mightily in the field. Moreover, he feels that he has something worth fighting for. The ruthlessness with which Japanese aeroplanes have wiped out hundreds of country villages of no possible military value, has roused the Chinese people against them as they have never been roused before.

Of these factors the 8th Route (ex-Communist) Army, now merged in the Hopei and Chahar Border Government, have made admirable use. They saw from the first that for the success of guerrilla warfare the peasant must be with them, and they devoted themselves to bettering the conditions of his life and educating him politically. They have long shed the extreme Communist ideology of 15 years ago, and are now really nothing more than agrarian reformers. They lead a Spartan existence, their highest officials faring very little better than the rank and file, and they pay in full for everything they take, with the result that the peasants help them wherever they go. They never risk a pitched battle, and when the Japanese organize a big expedition against them they scatter like a cloud of flies to reappear elsewhere. An offshoot of their movement has recently sprung up in eastern Central China on the lower Yangtze and appears to be very active. Wrecking trains, destroying mines and factories and nipping off small parties of Japanese, which month by month mount up to considerable totals, the guerrillas steadily bleed their enemy, thwart his development of China's resources and to a very large extent provide themselves with arms and munitions at his expense.

If to the peasants of North China the guerrillas have brought new hopes of brighter existence, to the West and South-West the war, with all its terrible devastation elsewhere, has indeed proved a godsend. There is plenty of reliable foreign evidence as to the extraordinary developments already reached in these vast and formerly neglected regions. In their retreat from Nanking and Hankow the Government succeeded in transporting to West China large quantities of factory plant with which, supplemented by importations from abroad, new factories have been established. Millions of refugees from Eastern China have been encouraged to start cottage industries, an enterprise in which Mme. Chiang Kai-shek is particularly interested.

And thousands of professors and students have literally tramped hundreds of miles from their colleges in the East—against which the Japanese aeroplanes seem to have expended their worst anger—to found new colleges in the West.

That the Chinese still contrive to do a good deal of trade with the outside world, in spite of transport difficulties and loss of their principal ports is shewn by the astonishing fact that their exports from "free China" through Hongkong in 1939 amounted to 302,000,000 Hongkong dollars, or nearly 56,000,000 dollars more than in 1938. Tea, wood oil, tungsten and tin were the principal exports, and as the development of Western China advances, and the new railways that are being built in it come into operation, there seems no reason why these should not increase and be added to by others.

The strength of China—source of that perfect confidence in the future which is so noticeable in all Chinese—may be summed up as consisting in her enormous size and limitless manpower; the fact that almost everything she needs lies in her own soil only awaiting development; and perhaps most of all that her social system, hardly touched as yet by the complications of industrialism, is simple and elastic, resting mainly on the man with the hoe and thus capable of the most rapid recuperation.

As one turns to Japan one's first feeling may well be admiration for the ease with which a naturally poor country has borne for nearly three years the huge expenses of a war which was never intended to last for more than three months. In 1931, the year in which Manchuria was seized, Japan's budget was roughly *£87,000,000. This year's is £664,560,000, which is more than the whole national debt when the war began. The China "incident" is estimated already to have cost £1,000,000,000. As the *Times* Tokyo correspondent says, "Japan is spending more on the China war, in proportion to her resources, than America, a far richer country, spent at the height of the world war." In addition, Japan has been able to find large sums for industrial development and the assistance of Manchukuo. Yet all this has been done from her own resources, without the

*For convenience yen have been converted into £. But it must be remembered that owing to the higher purchasing value of money in Japan, all figures must be multiplied by at least three to get the equivalent in English value.

foreign loans which helped her in the war with Russia 35 years ago.

But there are many signs that matters are far from well. The article from Tokyo, already quoted, in the *Times* of March 28, drew a very gloomy picture, the more remarkable for its contrast with the former highly confident tone of this writer. He dwells on "the increasing scarcity of goods in the midst of increasing abundance of money : "

The country's productive powers have been drained into munitions work, and the heavy industries needed as the foundation of the "new order" in East Asia. The result is a decrease of the export trade and a scarcity of consumers' goods. In Japan, now the world's greatest producer of cotton textiles, there is a chronic scarcity of cotton cloth. In the greatest rice-producing country there is a scarcity of rice.

Taxation had already been trebled since the war began and this year's budget will add another £42,000,000. Already the Japanese people have had to give up all their gold, only wedding rings and the gold fillings of teeth being exempt. Now there is to be a similar sweep-up of silver. The apparently favourable trade balance is due partly to rigid restriction of all imports not required for the war, partly to exports to China and Manchukuo, which yield no foreign exchange. With the foreign countries from which Japan must buy indispensable raw materials her balance is increasingly adverse.

No sign appears of any weakening in the national will to conquer China, but there is growing impatience at the long duration of the war. This is naturally intensified by the fact that the Japanese people have been rigidly kept from knowing the true state of affairs. The bureaucratic Government which has reduced the Diet to little more than a debating society is bitterly criticized. Japan is now under her fourth Cabinet since the war began. Each one has come in with a flourishing of promises to end the war and alleviate popular burdens. But since the war obstinately refuses to end, the burdens certainly cannot be lightened. It is significant that the "Oriental Economist" of Tokyo, possibly the best and most trustworthy periodical in Japan, ended a survey of the situation, in its January number, with the conclusion that the last resources of the present method of running the war had been exhausted.

There is no practical means of mitigating the tight demand—supply condition in commodities (says the "Oriental Economist") and curbing the tendency toward higher prices, if Government expenditure and production expansion projects are allowed to absorb disproportionately heavy shares of the commodity volume. . . . The Government faces the necessity of effecting a diplomatic adjustment with respect to the China Affair and other issues. The year 1940 promises to be characterized by a striking volte-face of Japanese policy both domestic and external.

And certainly Japan's position abroad is not easy, Germany's treachery to the Anti-Comintern Pact knocked away the great safeguard against Russian meddling in the Far East on which Japan had relied and revived that haunting fear of Russia which has been the mainspring of Japanese foreign policy for 60 years back. At the beginning of this year, through what influences it is hard to say, there was a movement towards the settling up of outstanding differences between the two countries. But it has failed. The joint commission called at Harbin to fix the boundaries between Manchukuo and the Russian sphere, particularly Outer Mongolia, has broken down; and the negotiations in Moscow for a trade agreement are also said to have deadlocked. Within the past month there has been a revival of those frontier "incidents," which twice in recent years almost seemed to be rushing the two countries into war. Reports also that Russia is again helping China liberally with aeroplanes, munitions and instructors may be exaggerated but certainly do not lessen Japan's anxieties.

Even more serious is the uncertainty as to what America means to do about the trade agreement which expired last January. America was always Japan's largest supplier of petrol, cotton, scrap iron, machine tools and other necessities, and now she is almost the only one since the British Empire needs all its resources for itself. Hence the feverish energy with which Japan is working to enlarge her dealings with Argentina, Mexico, Bolivia, Paraguay and other South American States. But these could only prove a partial alleviation, and meanwhile the American public are growing less and less pleased with Japan. They have some hundreds of claims against her for damage to their interests in China, and patronage of that country is an American tradition. Such influential men as Senator Key Pitman and Mr. Stimson are pressing for an embargo on the export to Japan of anything definable as war

material and even some of the isolationist group are recently reported to be coming round to this view.

In these circumstances Japan has no other course than to push on with all her might in bolstering up the puppet government of Wang Ching-wei, which was inaugurated with much ceremony in Nanking on March 30. If behind this government she can somehow restore peace and get trade moving, she hopes that in time other parts of China will gradually be drawn into its aegis, General Chiang Kai-shek's adherents will drift away till he is reduced to the level of a remote and insignificant rebel, and Japan will be able to present the world with a *fait accompli* before the return of peace in Europe allows other Powers to checkmate her designs.

To expect all this from such a crew as Wang has got together is asking a great deal. He himself has long had the reputation of being impossible to work with and incapable of any constructive undertaking, while his siding with the Japanese has completely alienated his oldest and best friends. Of his government, two were leaders of the pro-Japanese Anfu Party of 20 years ago, notoriously the most corrupt government within memory; one is his brother-in-law, who has probably fallen in behind for family reasons; one is his publicity agent; others are former creatures of Wang's or have old affiliations to Japan; five have never been heard of before.

It is noteworthy that the one man of ability whom the Japanese have managed to secure, Wang Keh-min, head of the puppet government in Peking, has no connection with the Nanking régime, but will carry on his administration in the north unchanged in all but name. Outside Nanking nobody took any notice of Wang Ching-wei's inauguration, and nobody, Chinese or foreigner, expects that China will take any notice of him. But Japan has promised to recognize him and General Abe, lately Prime Minister, has been invested by the Emperor as Ambassador to Nanking.

This means that, however little he may mean to the Chinese, Wang will have a certain nuisance value for foreigners. Complaints on business matters taken to Tokyo will be blandly referred to "the recognized Government of China in Nanking". Already the Japanese Foreign Office has intimated plainly that

the extent to which foreigners will be able to do business in China will depend on their readiness to fit in with the "new order". This game has been successfully played in Manchuria, so why not in China?

The answer is that China is not Manchuria and the conditions are totally different. Manchuria was a vacuum when Mr. Pu Yi was conveniently spatchcocked into the Emperor Kang Tê. The Japanese were forced to invent him or annex the country outright. In China there is a very efficient Government—a much better one than it was in pre-war days—led by one of the ablest men alive, who may justly claim to have the nation behind him. And this Government's writ runs effectively through fully three-quarters of China, all behind the meagre Japanese lines and around their scattered outposts. In Manchuria, too, foreign interests were comparatively trivial. In China they are very large, those of Great Britain alone being estimated at some £300,000,000.

But above all Great Britain and America, with whom stand France and the smaller Powers, have declared and have informed Japan in the most solemn manner that they adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty, with which her apparent schemes for China are utterly incompatible.

What exactly she means by her "new order in East Asia" Japan declines to say. All that we have on the subject is the outline sketched by Prince Konoye in December, 1938, which might mean anything. Chinese are sure that the "new order" would reduce them to a mere colony of Japan's, with the doors tight shut on everyone else. Foreigners, with the past two-and-a-half years' record of deliberate Japanese attacks on their business in China, have every reason for taking the same view. In any case the "new order" is plainly a flat violation of the Nine Power Treaty, by which Japan pledged herself with others to respect "the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China".

Here is a point of principle between Japan and the Western Powers on which the latter can accept no compromise.

It is, perhaps, fortunate for Japan that Prince Konoye's statement was drawn so vaguely. Equally it could be interpreted in the most obnoxious manner and in some face-saving

formula which would preserve all China's rights intact. One cannot help thinking that sooner or later Japan will have to take this latter course.

Great as is the Japanese capacity for self-sacrifice, 70,000,000 people, almost entirely dependent on other countries for the sinews of war, cannot indefinitely contend with 400,000,000 who have most of what they need under their hands and are inspired with the will to fight. Already there are reports that Japan is having difficulty in maintaining her drafts to China owing to her heavy losses of men. And as this article is being written comes the news that the Chinese have recaptured two towns in Central China which had been in Japanese possession for over a year, thus proving their ability to drive the Japanese from strongly garrisoned towns. The armies of China are no more the same as those which lost Nanking and threw away Canton, and daily their confidence rises higher.

THE WARS AND THE DRAMA

BY ST. JOHN ERVINE

THE changes which took place in the state of the English theatre during the twenty-one years which elapsed between the suspension, in 1918, of the war which began in 1914, and its resumption in 1939, were numerous and drastic. They have not yet been fully revealed. The actor-managerial system, which was in full force in 1914, was in ruins in 1916. There was not a trace of it left in 1919. Its leaders, Alexander, Tree, Waller and Wyndham, were dead, and the days of individual management in the West End were over. The actor-manager had been replaced by the syndicate, and to-day there is no actor, not even Mr. Gielgud, who owns and directs a theatre. The Bosnian boy of twenty who shot the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on June 29, 1914, shot away the lives of many millions of men and women, and may have shot with them a culture and a civilization which seemed to be secure. The tendencies which have prevailed in Europe since that date may be more clearly perceived in drama than in any other form of art ; for it is less individual in its expression, more dependent on the co-operation of other people, than are literature, painting, music and sculpture. The poet can dispense with aid. In the last resort, he can recite his verse. But the dramatist cannot act his play himself, nor is its effect, when performed by a competent cast, the same when an audience is absent or small as it is when an audience is present or large. The general conditions of social and political life affect the dramatist more rapidly and surely than they affect any other artist. A novelist can live on the sale of ten thousand copies of his book, but a dramatist will be a frightful failure if no more than that number of persons see his play performed.

One of the chief tendencies of our time is to over-emphasize the need for centralization and communal activity. It includes

the belittlement, if not the suppression, of individual effort and personality. Its effect on the theatre was almost instantaneous. On the day that war began, direction and ownership in the theatre were mainly in the hands of highly-individualized actors and actresses. On the day it was suspended, direction and ownership were exclusively in the hands of groups of business men who neither acted nor wrote nor, in the English technical sense of the term, produced plays. This change in the direction and ownership is the most important of the changes in the economy of the theatre, and its effects are profound. We cannot yet say whether they are for the better or the worse. All we know is that a theatre which is controlled by a score of individuals of unusual character, each owning and directing his own enterprise, must, by its very nature, be vastly different from one which is owned and directed by a few syndicates, some of which are interested only in the raising of rent.

The claim that the actor-managed theatre was more diverse in its productions than the theatre which is owned and directed by syndicates cannot be sustained. It is untrue to say that the latter is less adventurous than the former, or that actor-managers were readier to risk their money on new or unfashionable enterprises than the syndicates. The firm of H. M. Tennent, Ltd., has done more for Chekhov than any actor-manager did for Ibsen or Shaw, nor has it been less lavish or resourceful in its productions of Shakespeare than Tree. It would appear at first glance that a theatre controlled by such dissimilar and distinguished men and women as Irving, Ellen Terry, the Kendals, Alexander, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Tree, Waller, Wyndham, Wilson Barrett, John Hare, Cyril Maude, Forbes Robertson, Arthur Bouchier, the Vanbrughs, H. B. Irving, Charles Hawtrey, Martin Harvey, Matheson Lang, Edward Compton, Fred Terry and F. R. Benson, together with their juniors and probable successors, Gerald du Maurier, Henry Ainley, Owen Nares, Gladys Cooper, Fay Compton and Godfrey Tearle, most of whom were acting simultaneously, must, by the very nature of those people, be more various than a theatre in which six or seven syndicates of almost anonymous persons possess all authority and power. But it has not proved to be so. The stars were more fixed in their orbits than the

syndicates. The playgoer knew exactly what to expect at Drury Lane, the Lyceum, His Majesty's, the Haymarket, St. James's, Daly's and the Criterion, when stars owned and directed them ; but he does not know what to expect to-day. The young Guardee, going to the Gaiety, a few years ago, to see girls, was bewildered to find himself confronting a play by Maeterlinck, while the earnest student of the drama, going to His Majesty's to see *Hamlet*, found, instead, a pantomime, called *Chu Chin Chow*, or, later on, a musical piece by Mr. Coward.

The actor-manager was restricted by his own range and personality. There is no such restriction on a syndicate, which can as easily produce a play by Chekhov as by Miss Dodie Smith. Mr. Harry Tennent and Mr. Hugh Beaumont, the directors of H. M. Tennent, Ltd., are more free than any actor-manager ever was to consider a play as a play and not as a vehicle for personal exploitation, because they are not themselves actors and are, therefore, under no obligation to think of the parts they may have to perform. Here, then, is a gain to be set against any loss that may have been caused by the abolition of the actor-managerial system. Formerly, the player tended to be more important than the play, but now the play tends to be more important than the player. Advocates of the syndicates may justifiably say that they have raised the status of the play without diminishing that of the player. The stars are not less refulgent than they were thirty years ago and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to say that the quality of the plays produced by the syndicates is less striking than the quality of those produced by actor-managers. Mr. Bronson Albery, who, with Mr. Howard Wyndham, directs three West End theatres, can claim to have housed much better plays than the *Two Roses* which his father wrote for Henry Irving. The firm of Reandco have never staged so poor a play as *The Bells*. The fact of finance operated not less powerfully for the actor-manager than it acts for the syndicate. Many actor-managers were only nominally owners of their theatres. They had their "backers," even if the "backer" was no more than a mortgage-holding bank.

The historian of these times in the theatre will probably find

the profound change in its ownership and direction of much less significance and importance than other influences. He will not be able to disregard the competition of other forms of entertainment, such as tennis, motoring, moving-pictures and wireless, and he will probably wonder what it was that almost excluded the working-class from the theatre. Prior to 1914, working-people habitually frequented the play, but after that year, they withdrew from it. The cheapness, accessibility and comfort of the cinema are, no doubt, the deciding factors in this extraordinary development, but they cannot be the sole factors; for we find that young people, in other classes, go to the theatre less than their elders. It is likely that the historian will find in the prevailing mood of society itself a more potent agent against the theatre than in any other single force. Europe was exhausted and disillusioned during the years of suspended warfare, and that fact, in itself, was sufficient to change the whole character of the drama. The dæmonic energy of Bernard Shaw, the disturbing sweetness of Barrie, and the compassion of John Galsworthy were replaced by the nerveless despair of Noel Coward, the acrid cynicism of Somerset Maugham and the sentimental cynicism of Chekhov. Mind mattered less than emotion. Technical skill was subordinated to sudden effects. Henry Arthur Jones and Pinero constructed their plays so skilfully that they almost deprived their characters of humanity; but Noel Coward, despite his sense of the stage, appeared to improvise his plays; they resembled charades. It is possible now to speak of Mr. Coward in the past tense because, though he is only forty, his vogue, temporarily at all events, is over. Pinero's world was said, unjustly, to be restricted to the parish of St. James's, but Mr. Coward's world can, more truly, be bounded on the north, south, east and west by the Embassy Club. That world is out of joint. It is, indeed, only "a joint". But we shall deceive ourselves if we suppose that Mr. Coward will remain under a cloud. His swift and agile mind may surprise us all by developing a deeper sense of values than he has hitherto possessed. It must not be forgotten that he brought a note into the most trivial entertainment that was not in it before. Can we disregard an author who, writing a spectacular musical piece for Drury Lane, concludes it with a

song so bitter as *Twentieth Century Blues*? What, one wonders, would George Edwardes have said to any author who brought him such a lyric as this :

Why is it that civilized humanity
Must make the world go wrong?
In this hurly burly of insanity
Your dreams cannot last long.
We've reached a headline—
The Press headline—every sorrow
Blues value is News value to-morrow.

His anger and distress, had the ladies of his chorus been asked to sing the following refrain to that verse, would have been eloquent and profuse :

Blues, Twentieth Century Blues, are getting me down.
Who's escaped those weary Twentieth Century Blues?
Why, if there's a God in the sky, why shouldn't he grin?
High above this dreary Twentieth Century din,
In this strange illusion,
Chaos and confusion,
People seem to lose their way.
What is there to strive for,
Love or keep alive for? Say—
Hey, hey, call it a day.
Blues, nothing to win or lose.
It's getting me down.
Blues, I've got those weary Twentieth Century Blues.

Edwardes, one feels, would have exclaimed, "What do you think the Gaiety is—a morgue or a penitentiary?" That note of utter despondency, that wail of infant atheism and futility, continually recurs even in Mr. Coward's lightest pieces. It is a note which had been heard in other works than his, and was first heard while he was still at school. John Galsworthy, excessively sorry for mankind, had raised it in his novels and his plays, and it had been heard in places where it had seemed least likely to be sounded. The figure of John Bull had been transformed from that of a bluff, upstanding, resolute man into that of a nervous, apprehensive, shrinking little fellow, John Citizen or The Little Man, who was invited to believe at one and the same time that he was supporting the world and that he was unfit for his task.

The contagion of false humility and self depreciation spread across the world. It infected America no less than Germany where a high hysterical note prevailed so loudly for fifteen years that no other note could be heard. The Expressionists screamed

their way through the *Reich* until a reaction set in, and those who had tried to divest humanity of all its attributes, produced the supreme egotist, the essential Tappertit, who has landed the world in its present mess. Ernst Toller, who committed suicide in New York, was not, his English translator, Mr. Ashley Dukes, declared, an Expressionist, but he had affinities with that school. He cared less for people than for principles, and was occasionally confused by his inability to distinguish between a principle and a pronouncement. His plays were poor, for his talent was not essentially dramatic, but narrative, and he had suffered too much to be able to surmount his sufferings. He was, so to speak, his own cast. But he was the most human of the overwrought authors of Germany, personally likeable and transparently honest. His residual sanity preserved him from the extremities to which another German dramatist, Georg Kaiser, was addicted. Kaiser, whose best-known works, so far as this country is concerned, are *From Morn to Midnight* and *Gas*, both of which had some vogue in advanced dramatic organizations, though neither of them was popular even there, abstracted his people from human form, making discoloured symbols of them and denying them even names. They were labelled "A Clerk" or "A Woman" or "A Lamplighter" or "The Person Next Door". Admirers of expressionism, a form of drama which is extremely difficult to define, since its practitioners quarrel with each other more than they quarrel with their opponents, praised Kaiser because his plays "contained no characters". Dickens leaves his readers in no doubt about the difference between David Copperfield and Uriah Heap, but Kaiser and the Expressionists in general perceived no difference between one person and another, nor would they have acknowledged any difference if they had perceived it. One man, in their opinion, was as bad as another.

De-personalized drama became the fashion in advanced circles, and dramatists delighted, though their audiences did not, in people who were mass-produced emblems of current doctrines, possessing no personal characteristics, no courage, no faith or force, no will, but only, at best, a despairing envy which might, under great stress, cause them to run amok, as did the clerk in Kaiser's *From Morn to Midnight*, or commit a squalid murder, as

did the clerk in Mr. Elmer Rice's play, *The Adding Machine*. The chief figure in these plays was almost invariably a bank clerk, a cheerless and invertebrate man, bullied in the bank and nagged at home, who tried to console himself for his drab existence by imagining himself suddenly possessed of large sums of money, dallying with desirable girls, idling in expensive pleasure resorts, or avenging himself for his wrongs by slaying all whom he supposed to have wronged him. This was the drama of the neurotic serf. John Galsworthy's Falder, in *Justice*, had begotten clerks a little more mutinous than himself. He had stolen money and committed suicide; they stole money and committed murder. The force and splendour of Mr. Shaw's people, culminating in the heroism of *Saint Joan*, seemed not to make any impression on his juniors, because, perhaps, they talked about their vitality too much. The drama had become devitalized and emptied of heroic quality. Mr. Coward was the pivot on which the stage swung round from Galsworthy and Georg Kaiser and Elmer Rice to Mr. Auden and Mr. Isherwood. It seemed as if it might be strewn with disembowelled bodies. The rise of totalitarian systems of government, directly and indirectly, operated disastrously on the drama. "They tell me we have no art," said Napoleon. "I must speak to the Minister of the Interior about it." This destitution may be found in Russia, Germany and Italy where, even devoted communists and fascists admit, there is no art of any worth whatsoever being produced. What drama there is in these countries, is the most dreary and puerile agglomeration of doctrinaire beliefs and dialectics that the dullest wits can imagine.

With the arrival of the "modern" poet, the wide gulf that separates the several generations of this age became apparent. The separation is probably greater than has ever before been known. The distance, in time, between Mr. Coward and Mr. Auden and Mr. Isherwood is slight, much less than that between Mr. Shaw and Mr. Coward, less even than that between Mr. Coward and myself. Mr. Auden is thirty-three, Mr. Coward is forty, I am fifty-six, and Mr. Shaw is eighty-four. Seven years separate Mr. Coward from Mr. Auden, but although there are sixteen years between Mr. Coward and me, and forty-four years between him and Mr. Shaw, he is nearer to us than he is to his

junior. He may mark the end of us, but it is less certain that he marks the beginning of Mr. Auden. Here is a fact which may seem profoundly significant to the historian. I cannot establish contact with Mr. Auden, but I can establish contact with Mr. Coward and with Mr. Shaw. I can understand Chaucer more easily than I can understand Mr. T. S. Eliot who is an exception in so far that he is nearer my age than Mr. Coward. Mr. Eliot does not appear to me, whatever his talent as a poet may be, to have any talent as a dramatist. *Sweeney Agonistes* is a fragment, according to its author, but it has been publicly performed as a play, and may, therefore, be treated as one, especially in this part of this paper, since its spirit is akin to the depressing plays of the Suspension. Sweeney is found in the company of a dreary wench, called Doris, to whom he confides his belief that there are "only three things":

Doris : What things ?
Sweeney : Birth, and copulation, and death.
 That's all, that's all, that's all, that's all.
 Birth, and copulation, and death.
Doris : I'd be bored.
Sweeney : You'd be bored.
 Birth, and copulation, and death.
Doris : I'd be bored.
Sweeney : You'd be bored.
 Birth, and copulation, and death.
 That's all the facts when you come to brass tacks ;
 Birth, and copulation, and death.
 I've been born, and once is enough.
 You don't remember, but I remember,
 Once is enough.

Mr. Eliot's hero suffers, it seems clear, from those Twentieth Century Blues which oppressed Mr. Coward's young lady in *Cavalcade*. Mr. Eliot is an avowed Christian ; Mr. Coward is not ; but it seems that there is little to choose between their belief and unbelief.

Superficially, there was some gain in the Suspension. Authors were allowed more latitude of speech and a wider range of subject than they formerly were, but the gain was more apparent than real. To be able to use the word " bloody " in dialogue is not a serious enlargement of freedom, nor are we certain that it is a liberty worth taking. The right to mention aberrations of sex unequivocally may be worth the discomfort it causes, but that

worth has yet to be proved. The significant fact about the drama of the Suspension is not that there was an increase of freedom, but that there was an increase of despair. All results had to be quick. Expression must be emotional rather than intellectual, and the emotional content of the expression must be shallow. Din was preferred to design. A wailing noise, called crooning, became the most popular form of music. The chief, if not the only, difference between one piece of crooning and another was that the names were different. The dance became a dismal shuffle by people who could neither smile nor speak. There was even an attempt to produce a drama in which the characters did little more than make animal noises. Dialogue became briefer and more brief—little flip-flip sentences, scarcely half a line in length. The plays shortened and the intervals lengthened, until at last a comedy acted for little longer than ninety minutes. Humour declined on the light stage, where spectacle was preferred. It was almost enough to say of a play that it was serious to ensure its failure.

Yet there was occasion for satisfaction during the Suspension, even if there was greater occasion for dissatisfaction. The desire for drama, despite every discouragement and every rival entertainment, remained undiminished; and since drama, more than any other art, is dependent on the good will of the people, this irrefutable fact denotes that it is unlikely to perish. Mr. Sean O'Casey came out of a Dublin slum to remind us that poetic speech still lingers on workmen's lips. It is unfortunate that Mr. O'Casey has abandoned his superb music-hall plays and devoted himself to proletarian politics—which have little, if anything, to do with working-class life—but the fact he demonstrated in *Juno and the Paycock* remains true: it has not been abolished by his Left Plays of the Month. The troops have demanded more plays and fewer variety turns in their broadcast and camp programmes, but they are unwilling to take cocktail pieces with any pleasure. When the Government closed every theatre in the country, throwing thousands of people of every denomination out of work, the general public immediately began to devise some sort of dramatic entertainment for itself. Where nothing else was possible, they read plays to each other in their homes. It may be that the gap in our lives

which was made by the outbreak of the war in 1914 will be widened and deepened by its resumption in 1939. Mr. Auden uses words differently from the way in which they are used by his elders. It may be, that after the War, a generation will arise which is as incomprehensible to him as he is to us. Or we may find the new generation gratefully returning to the standards of Mr. Auden's seniors. The essential fact is that the drama will survive if the spirit of freedom is not destroyed. It will die if freedom dies.

(Mr. St. John Ervine will contribute a second article "The Wars and the Actor" to the August issue of THE FORTNIGHTLY).

THE LEGEND OF SAINT SERVITOR

Added to the *Acta Sanctorum*

BY HENRY W. NEVINSON

LATE in the evening the Emperor Marcus Aurelius sat writing in his Prætorian tent, placed in the centre of a Roman legion's square camp on the wooded plain just south of the Danube. It was bitter winter, and by the whole-some routine of Roman armies, the legions should have withdrawn into winter-quarters while the Emperor returned to Rome for health and public business. But the danger still threatening the northern frontiers of the Empire was too serious to allow of relaxation, and though this was the eighth campaign conducted with apparent success by the Emperor himself, he was resolved to carry it through to the end.

As usual after the day's activity he was jotting down his "Private Thoughts" or "Meditations"—a diary of mental reflections that might have occurred to him during the hours of partial light. As so often he began with a quotation from Plato, suggested as an encouragement for enduring the hardships of a winter campaign. He wrote :—

In whatever station a soldier finds himself—whether he has chosen the post of his own free will as the best for him, or has been assigned to it by his officer—it is his duty to remain there, counting neither death nor anything else an evil to be compared with the disgrace of desertion.

It was a consolation to think he was still a disciple of Plato, but reflecting upon himself and his own insignificance in this vast Universe of Nature under the rules of time and space, he added the desperate reflection :—

Asia ! Europe ! what are they but little chinks in the world ? The ocean is but a drop, and Mount Athos but a clod, the present moment but a tiny point in eternity.

That humiliating contrast between the magnitude of Nature and his own unimportance perpetually shadowed his mind, and

he sat far into the night contemplating a subject so transcendent and so hard for an active personality to realize, until at last he closed his papyrus tablets scratched with the sharp-pointed style, wrapped himself in his furs and lay down upon his camp bed.

He had made it a rule of life never to excuse himself by pleading that he had no time or was too much occupied, and so, when at the first sign of dawn the Præfect who managed the legion's stores came through the folded curtain of the tent and stood at attention, Marcus roused himself at once, and asked, "Well, what is it?"

"Emperor," replied the Præfect, "I have caught a deserter trying to steal provisions from the store. He said he was under orders to feed the enemy."

"I never gave such an order," said the Emperor. "What sort of a man is he?"

"He is a soldier of the first cohort, his name is Servitor, and he calls himself a Christian. There are a dozen of these Christians in that cohort. I regret it, for they are always appealing to some authority greater than the Emperor, which is impossible."

"Those Jews are always a nuisance," sighed the Emperor, "always a troublesome and obstinate people. Show him in, and tell the executioner to stand ready."

The Præfect led in a soldier, dressed like an ordinary legionary, but disarmed.

"Soldier," said the Emperor sternly, "you are charged with attempting to escape and convey food to the enemy. The penalty for both crimes is death. Have you anything to say?"

"I obey my master's orders," replied the prisoner.

"I am your master," said the Emperor. "I command the army as Imperator and Princeps of the Senate and the Roman people."

"I obey the orders of a greater master," said the prisoner. "His name is Jesus in Hebrew, but the Greeks have called him Christus as being the anointed king of the world, and we in his service are called Christians."

"I have heard of him," said the Emperor. "A turbulent rebel, whom even the Jews disowned. They clamoured for his

execution, and he died under the Divine Tiberius long ago. You cannot obey his orders."

"He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father," said the prisoner.

"Much the same was told of the Divine Augustus," remarked the Emperor, slightly smiling. "The most charming and loyal of our poets even described him as lying at ease among the gods and heroes quaffing nectar with roseate lips. That is not a futurity that I personally envy, but I suppose that when death confers deity upon me I shall be obliged to endure Elysium as I endure my earthly lot. How did you acquire the order from your master so long dead even though transported to heaven?"

"His word abides for ever," said the prisoner.

"And what is the eternal order of which you speak?" asked the Emperor.

"My master's order is to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us. And our master's greatest follower wrote, if your enemies hunger feed them."

"Was it, then, to feed the enemy that you committed the capital crime of stealing from the legion's store?"

"I obeyed my master," answered the prisoner. "The enemy is hungry. They creep across the river crying aloud for food. They point to their mouths and their pinched bellies. But we kill them on the bank, as the centurions order."

"The centurions do their duty," said the Emperor. "Starvation is our chief defence, especially in winter. I know these savages. Seven times have I driven them back from this river over which they repeatedly attempt to swarm south into the warm and fertile lands of our Empire. The Divine Julius himself had much trouble to check their advance over that other great river, on the west, and the Divine Augustus held them back only with terrible loss to his legions. Seven times have I stretched out the army along the Danube's course, lest the savages should sweep down through the Alpine passes into Italy herself, the nursery of the Roman people. Time after time I have forced them to return to their gloomy forests and hills covered with mist. There they seek shelter in wretched hovels of wood and leaves, dragging out life through icy winters, crouched together for warmth like their bears and wolves.

Now they come again in hordes to devour civilization and destroy the glory of Rome. My legions confront them, but starvation is stronger than the sword."

"If your enemy is hungry," said the prisoner, "feed him."

"You have told me that before," said the Emperor, rather wearily, though with his habitual politeness. "You Jews are a persistent race. I visited Syria a year or two ago, and I am not likely to forget that journey. My most beautiful and most loveable wife, Faustina, died on our way over the Taurus Mountains, and there I built a temple to her memory as a goddess and the mother of my numerous children. Advancing into Syria to guard our Parthian frontier, I came to the ruins of Jerusalem, formerly your capital city, and found its condition deplorable. The city had been built on the flat summit of a hill surrounded on two sides by a deep ravine, worn by a little stream called Kedron. Only from the north and west could an army have approached it. On the eastern side the land sloped gradually down to a large lake so full of salt and bitumen that not even fish could live in it. Some attempts had been made to restore the city since the Divine Titus destroyed it, but hardly one stone remained standing upon another, and the city looked like a skeleton stretched upon the rocks. The walls lay in ruins, the streets were mouldering to rubble. Nothing remained standing except a length of massive wall supporting the flattened space upon which Rome had allowed a King Herod to build a temple to the local god, whose name has escaped me, though I heard it at the time. Our law had expelled all the Jews, but a few still crept about, seeking shelter among the holes and cellars of the ancient ruins. Glad to escape from the ghostly scene, I pitched my camp upon a high hill a mile or two north-east—the same hill upon which the Divine Titus pitched for his main attack upon the walls about a hundred years before. There, all night long I was kept awake by the howling of wolves and jackals. Such has been the fate of your Jewish race, a warning to all rebels against Rome."

"Wretched, no doubt," said the prisoner, "but I am not a Jew. I am a Roman citizen, born at Ostia, at the mouth of Rome's river."

"I rejoice to hear it," said the Emperor. "But the religion

called Christian is undoubtedly an offshoot of the Jewish abominable superstition, as the historian Tacitus called it. He justly classed you with the Jews as being held guilty by the universal detestation of mankind. When the Divine Tiberius banished all Jews to Sardinia, the historian added the comment, 'and if the unhealthy climate killed them off, that would be a cheap loss.' "

"Our master," replied the prisoner, "was born and brought up among Jews, yet the Jews hate us Christians as bitterly as we Romans hate the barbarians, whom we are commanded to love."

"It would be difficult indeed," the Emperor retorted, "even for your master to love these savages who are again threatening the northern frontiers of our Empire, driven by the sordid misery of their lives. Look at them even now as they wander up and down along that bank opposite. You see they let their hair grow far down over their shoulders, and that is well for them; for they fight almost naked to the waist. See how heavy and dull they look! Certainly, they have one good point—they never waste time over laughter. They devour lumps of flesh hardly warmed with fire and they drink fermented liquids which would deprive them of reason if they had any reason. After they are sated, they bellow like bulls, and lie torpid like dogs or swine. To eat and drink and copulate are their only delights, unless they set out to destroy some neighbouring tribe. They are divided into various tribes—Marcomanni, Quadredi, and a lot more. These tribes, as they populate up to the limits of their own districts, rush upon each other with extreme violence, throwing showers of darts and piercing the enemies' bodies with spears tipped with iron or simply sharpened and burnt at the ends. In these conflicts the women share with feminine fury, knowing that the enemy's best chance of destroying their tribe is to kill the women first.

"For gods they possess no marble statues, nor have they temples. They worship formless fantasies of ignorant imagination, and in the deepest recesses of their forests they celebrate bloody rites. The blood of a sacrificed man or woman is thought most acceptable to the full moon or to the sun returning after winter. Together with these religious sacrifices, they practise a

peculiar abomination by flaying the corpses and cutting the skins into strips or shapes, which the women adapt as light underclothes to protect or adorn the parts of their bodies not sheltered by the covering of furs. In times of famine like the present they slice off portions of the sacrificed body and roast them on long wooden spits for food. Why should Romans hand over our stores to keep brutish and obscene animals alive ?

"In front of their charging line they carry on long poles the heads of slaughtered wild beasts, dripping blood as signs of the fate in store for their enemies. As they charge they shout and yell in their barbaric language, which no human being but themselves ever understood. Unable to make letters, they cannot write or possess any records of the past, except that some of the men and women scream stories of hideous monsters and brutalized females. Why should we Romans waste our provisions to keep such obscene animals alive for a single day ? "

"It was for all mankind, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, that Christ died," answered the prisoner. "The more brutish the sinner, in the greater need of redemption does he stand."

"It was not worth a god's while to die for these savages," said the Emperor. "If you had studied the philosophers, you would know that what we Stoics call Universal Nature appears to be developing, however slowly, towards the attainment of an ideal state which the greatest philosopher beheld as in a vision. In some regions of our Empire the advance of mankind is now visible, though small. Leaving Greece and Asia out of account, consider only that realm of Italy which we both stand under our military oath to protect against these savages who are always lowering like volcanic fires upon our frontiers ready to plunder, overturn and annihilate.

"Remember how the greatest of our poets some two centuries ago, though he was often touched by the tears of mankind, suddenly rose to enthusiasm when he pictured our sunlit Italy ! On either side of her far-reaching coasts glitters a purple sea—the sea that cleanses all things, as a Greek dramatist said. Here are safe harbours for our ships, and inland lakes, almost as wide as seas. Here are no tigers, nor gaping lions, no poisonous plants or snakes. But here the olive and the myrtle grow, and trees with kindly fruits. Here roam the ewes in lamb beneath a sky

of perpetual spring, as though every month would be summertime.

“Think of our noble cities, built with such toil, our towns constructed on the edge of precipitous cliffs, and rivers sliding beneath their ancient walls ! Here sprang the vital heroes of the Roman race whose glories are told in the long records of our history. Hail, dear land of the primal gods, begetter of plenty, begetter of men. Were I a poet, I would sing of Italy, her glory and her arts, as I wandered from one Roman hamlet to another ! This is the land which savages are now intent to ravage and destroy as a mountain torrent in flood lays waste a cheerful village and covers it with slime. Here is the beneficent good of Nature. There is no good but good. There is no evil but evil. It is in the power of each race as of each human being to choose which it will have.”

“Emperor,” replied the prisoner, “even Italians must be redeemed together with the whole world. Even those who dwell in the palaces of Rome must be redeemed by the spirit of the Son of God.”

The Emperor sat silent for a time. Then he said, “Only the other day I wrote upon my tablets that a man may be virtuous even in a palace, and now you tell me that even in a palace a man may require what you call redemption. I know too well that in a palace there may be evil. That is no news to me.

“But come now !” he continued, “At the tent door you see the executioner waiting. Knowing the instant penalty, will you still persist in your crime as a deserter ?”

“My master ordered me to love my enemies and to feed them if they were hungry,” replied the prisoner without hesitation.

“Præfect,” said the Emperor, “take this man and loose him. If he still wants to cross the river with provisions, he may as well be put to death on that side of the river as on this.”

Bowing deeply to the Governor of the World, the Præfect withdrew with the prisoner called Servitor, and the Emperor Marcus turned again to the tablets on which he had written the night before. He read :—

Wipe out all that is mere opinion, but examine whatever comes your way. What anyone else has committed, let it lie where the guilt was. Examine whatever is spoken, and let your mind penetrate into cause and

effect. Make sure that all things lying halfway between virtue and vice shall remain indifferent to you. Finally, love mankind, and comply with the force of Universal Nature. Remember that, as at the seashore whatever you could see before is quickly hidden and covered up by fresh heaps of sand thrown over the first, even so in this life all former things are obliterated by those which immediately succeed.

He paused and sat for a while wondering what ridge of sand might next be deposited by the waves of time over all that he now saw and thought and felt. He remembered how once he had been a child, then a youth, then a young man in his prime, and now he was approaching old age. Every change from one age to another had been a kind of death. "We bury our friends," he thought, "but to bury ourselves, and we bury ourselves in passing from one of our ages to another. An old man has been buried five times already before his friends carry his corpse to the burning." Then he wrote:—

As my poet said, each of us at the long last must endure as ghosts the recompense ordained. Nothing can happen to us but what is implied in our Nature, just as nothing can happen to an ox, a vine, or a stone which is not in accord with its Nature, and to Nature only the good is good, and only the evil is evil. In all my thoughts and cares there must be nothing contrary to my own Nature, and my one object must be to move in harmony with that Universal Nature which appears to be working perpetually towards some aspect of perfection. Nature's road is rough, for the rocks of evil lie strewn upon our road. So thick lie evil and unhappiness that the very stars twinkle with weeping over our fate, as well they may. But none the less, all external pains must to us remain indifferent.

At this point the Emperor's meditations were interrupted by confused sounds of disturbance and shouting. He thought himself sure of the legions, but there had been examples of mutinies in which the soldiers had risen against Emperors and murdered them to secure plunder or a change in unpopular command. He hurried from the Prætorian tent into the freezing air, and strode down the river bank. There he at once perceived his Camp Prætor side by side with the released prisoner, Servitor, dragging a huge sledge down the smooth incline to the river's ice. They had heaped up a mound of various provisions drawn from the store-tents—whole sides of oxen and sheep, sacks of wheat and ground flour, lengths of bread, and large jars oozing with red wine from Italy. A crowd of legionaries stood looking on uttering shouts of rage and amazement. But at sight of the Emperor they were silent and stood at attention.

“Prætor,” he said when he reached the side of the sledge, “is that all it will hold?”

“Cæsar,” replied the Prætor, “we can cram in no more, and perhaps the ice would not stand a greater weight.”

“Servitor,” the Emperor continued, “your purpose is plain, and even a madman should have a purpose every day. You know well that speedy death by torture awaits you among the barbarians over there. But to you as to other mortals pain and death should be indifferent. Pernicious Christian or Jew as you may be, go in peace to your doom.”

At the word “Christian” some of the legionaries shouted “Jesus!” and others called upon the ancient gods of their childhood. But Servitor only said “My master’s command is, ‘If your enemy is hungry feed him.’”

He looked across the river, fixing his eyes upon a small inlet far on the other side. Taking his long iron-pointed lance, he pushed the sledge out upon the frozen surface, and it slid smoothly towards midstream. At the sight shouts of applause and derision rose from either bank. Again and again he struck the iron point into the ice, so that the sledge moved with increasing speed till it ran into the inlet he had observed.

Then the Emperor and the soldiers, watching from the camp, saw shaggy barbarians swarming round the sledge like famished wolves. With shouts they clambered over each other, falling upon the food wherever they could clutch a bit of something to eat. The greatest struggle was for the carcasses of the slaughtered beasts, which they tore in pieces, rending the joints apart, stripping the flesh from the bones, and eating the red fragments raw. Others, less fortunate, grabbed at the fruits and vegetables. The women seized the sacks of grain and flour, devouring all they could gather in their hands, and forcing some of it into the crying mouths of their children. Some of the men broke off the necks of the winejars, and drank till others forced the jars away for themselves. Soon the sledge was empty but for bones and fragments of crockery. Crowds of savages, attracted by the clamour, came running down in the hope that something might still be left for them, but nothing was.

As for Servitor, one woman tore off his cloak and lashed it round her naked body from neck to knee. Another unlaced his

helmet and tied it on her boy's head, amid much laughter. But the men who had secured anything to eat, clapped his back, threw their arms round his neck, and bore him up the bank into the wood beyond, uttering cries of joy and praise.

"We shall see legionary Servitor no more," said the Prætor. "My fear is they will make him a god, and try to absorb his powers by devouring him, as these barbarians do."

"Though they should tear him in pieces," said the Emperor, "he can suffer no hurt. Even a god may be virtuous."

So saying, he returned to the camp, and after visiting each section to see that all was in order, he retired to his vast tent. There as usual in the evening, he meditated on the events of the day and taking up his tablets, he wrote :—

Whatever any man does or says you must follow the guidance of your inner Nature, not for any other man's sake, but for the sake of your own Nature. Just as though gold or emerald or purple were continually saying each to itself, Whatever any man says or does, I must still remain gold or emerald or purple, keeping my own natural colour.

"That soldier Servitor," he went on in his reflections, "was certainly as constant as any dye or emerald or gold. No harm can befall him, for he is fulfilling his Nature."

When spring came, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius advanced the legions across the flooded Danube on rafts and entered the forest land that was to become part of Pannonia. So he came to a village called Vindobina, where afterwards the Imperial city of Vienna was to rise.

There he died, worn out by the toil of action and of thought. On the march up a legionary brought him as a curiosity a rough block of a fir tree, upon the flattened surface of which was rudely inscribed, as though cut with the point of a short sword, the words "Servitor Christi."

A FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE CONTEMPT OF LEARNING

BY M. ST. CLARE BYRNE

(Miss M. St. Clare Byrne continues the argument on the Contempt of Learning in 20th Century England started by Miss Dorothy L. Sayers in the April issue. Allowing merely for some such simple little Pirandello-ish stage-direction as Ego and Alter Ego change places and personalities the characters remain the same and the debate continues).

EGO : Confound you, Socrates, you have woken me up. Anyhow, I begin to perceive in our dialogue a certain lack of definition. In this pursuit of hares you and I are treating words as Humpty Dumpty did ; and as each of us understands what the other is choosing to make them mean all is well. But if our friends are to be lured into this we must define our terms. I propose, therefore, that you should define ' learning '.

ALTER EGO : I shall do no such thing ! Learning cannot be circumscribed within a dictionary definition, which will tend, I fancy, to confuse and equate it with knowledge.

EGO (*reaching out a long arm for H—K and L—N*) : It does. Learning is primarily " the action of acquiring knowledge ". It is also " Knowledge, especially of language or some department of literary or historical science acquired by systematic study ".

ALTER EGO : All right as far as it goes ; and the " study " is essential, as against the " experience " element in knowledge. Nevertheless, the kind of distinction we are both assuming is popularly accepted. Unfortunate children are ' crammed with knowledge ' and schoolboys ' know everything about wireless ', but no one thinks of describing them as learned.

EGO : The adjectival forms support you. Learning—learned ; as against Knowledge—knowledgeable—' knowing '.

ALTER EGO : Knowledge is a process : the getting-to-know, the accumulating of facts, information, technical data. It relates to the mastering of what is already known, familiarizing oneself with existing material.

EGO : Quantitative, where learning is qualitative ?

ALTER EGO : Yes. If you like, the raw material of learning : preliminary equipment ; jumping-off place. It is general ; has, as it were, a spatial spread. It covers the ground ; can be acquired by Infant Phenomenons—*nomena*— ?

EGO : *Nons*, I think. Whereas learning connotes intensity, depth, purpose, direction, canalization of energy—

ALTER EGO : —and has essentially that backward reach through time. It is not wisdom—

EGO : —but it seeks it, associating itself in study with the accumulated wisdom of mankind—the fruit of study plus contemplation.

ALTER EGO : Yes. And we must get in the idea that it is directed always towards synthesis ; characterized by ripeness, maturity, dispassionate enthusiasm ; informed by judgment, lit by the imagination—

EGO : These are supposed to be notes for a thesis, not the ground plan of an ode.

ALTER EGO : You want the essentials. There they are. But we would say, ‘ He has a thorough knowledge of book-keeping (or bee-keeping, or typing, or stage-management, or committee procedure, or the internal combustion engine), when we mean that a man knows his facts, and understands the practical application of theory.

EGO : How familiar one becomes with that distinction when writing testimonials ! I have praised the industry and knowledge of many, but of only one pupil in a life-time have I gone so far as to say, ‘ He has a natural love of learning ’. On the other hand, the Dictionary, as evidence of usage, suggests that the general tendency is to treat knowledge and learning as the same thing ; and at times, even, to attach an almost higher value to the former.

ALTER EGO : It may mean nothing more than the triumph of phonetic over semantic values. “ Knowledge is now no more a fountain sealed—”.

(*They continue in a dead-heat chorus; and a digression ensues—omitted here—in which they hurl quotations at each other*).

EGO (*the gleam of victory in the eye*): "Knowledge dwells, In heads replete with thoughts of other men". Cowper!

ALTER EGO (*trumping opponent's ace*): "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased".

EGO: That's the one I always want to inscribe over the Reading Room entrance. But I must remind you that this quotation-swopping is a "highbrow" amusement, for indulgence in which we have before now been censured.

ALTER EGO: Confound their impertinence! There we are, back again where we started, with "highbrow" used as a term of abuse. This hare *must* be coursed. Are you satisfied that we are of one mind in our usage of the words learning and knowledge, and that we have paid them off properly of a Saturday night?

EGO: More than satisfied.

ALTER EGO: Then can't I have my highbrow hare coursed? It's only a little one.

EGO: Beloved Socrates, you shall have it juggled! But we shall have to discriminate with some care; because although we object, very rightly, to the hearty moron who calls any well-read person a highbrow, we ourselves use the term highbrow to abuse that preciousness of appreciation which has heard of no poetry before Auden and Isherwood, and believes that "Art stopped short in the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine".

ALTER EGO: We do. But what I want to know is, who started this business of calling names? Was it the genuine intellectual, endeavouring to dissociate himself from this pseudo-learning with its cliques and its cults and its deliberate pursuit of singularity? Or was it the pseudo-intellectual who thus retorted, upon finding himself generally unacceptable in the strongholds of academic learning? Or did the idea just spring fully-grown from the head of the Great British Public on one of its off-days?

EGO: I haven't an idea. But I daresay someone will tell us. The trouble is that the G.B.P. persists in confusing the man of learning with what we call the highbrow.

ALTER EGO : Learning must take some of the responsibility for this unfortunate identification. It has always produced its fair share of eccentrics.

EGO : And to-day that is another count against it. We clamour for originality, and are mortally afraid of it when we get it. Everyone must toe the line. We frown upon excess—in manners, apparel, conduct, life : unless it is the excess of ostentation and material wealth.

ALTER EGO : And because learned women wear frightful hats—sometimes—and live on prunes and custard and stewy soup and soupy stew and tired lettuce—sometimes ; and because learned men are sometimes absent-minded or of slovenly habit ; *therefore*—ye gods—*therefore* we despise the thing itself.

EGO : We are liquidating the eccentric as steadily as possible. But to come back to your highbrow. I think he gives us an indication of what *kind* of learning it is that is despised to-day.

ALTER EGO : Most certainly it is not scientific learning, which is easily a best-seller, with its *Mathematics for the Million* and its *Mysterious Universe*.

EGO : Exactly. The contempt focuses upon the humaner studies, and upon such kinds of learning as involve the critical faculties, taste and discrimination, and postulate a general artistic cultural background.

ALTER EGO : So back we come to What is wrong with Education ? The answer being, utilitarian bias. And I am not at all sure that the rapid growth of scientific knowledge in the last fifty years is not mainly responsible. Its commercial value has been so completely recognized by the community at large that it is now better subsidized than any other branch of learning. It offers a ' safe ' career at every level of ability ; and it also offers the big prizes.

EGO : I believe it has also a more oblique kind of damage to answer for, and that the influence and impact of scientific method upon the humaner studies have materially contributed to the situation we are deploring. The enormous amount of highly specialized work devoted to original documents and records and to the more recondite aspects of literary and historical studies ; the application of bibliographical methods, especially in relation to Shakespearian problems ; the

superseding, in the editing of texts, of artistic and eclectic standards by 'scientific'; all these developments have made possible some very considerable and worth-while additions to the sum of human knowledge. Most work of this kind, however, is outside the scope and the sympathies of the ordinary educated reader. He is not qualified to estimate its real value : consequently he neglects it, and, by way of disregarding, proceeds to discounting and then to despising.

ALTER EGO : But surely a more scientific method was badly needed in literary and historical studies ? You can't want to go back to the days when Coleridge could dismiss the Porter scene in *Macbeth* as an actors' interpolation simply because he found it 'disgusting', so that *therefore* it could not possibly have been written by Shakespeare ?

EGO : Certainly not. But the fact remains, Coleridge could *write*. So could historians like Macaulay and Froude. And in consequence the ordinary cultured man read what they wrote. Moreover, their angle coincided with the ordinary man's : they agreed as to what was of first-rate importance. Nowadays, with a few honorable exceptions, the ordinary man finds the expert's style dull and his matter dry ; they light no candle in his mind.

ALTER EGO : Yes : and often enough he is by no means sure that this specialist material is really of first-rate importance. And I can tell you yet another result of the impact of such studies upon the mind of the ordinary educated non-specialist. He gives them enough consideration to find out for himself that they are not for his reading, and puts them aside as 'too deep for me'. But, he gets just enough of what they have to give to put him out of conceit with the older writers too. He has gone beyond them, willy-nilly.

EGO : It looks as if, for the last fifty years or so, learning has been too largely represented by, and therefore identified with, the work of the specialist. Consequently the ordinary cultured reader has lost touch with such studies ; and for serious reading has been deflected into other channels—notably the semi-learned and the pseudo-learned, such as 'popular' biography at its best and its worst.

ALTER EGO : Who is starting hares now ? We shall have

to tackle this whole business of popularization, and it is going to take us from accessibility, via stunts and publicity, to vulgarization. We must anatomize the attack from within; publishers, journalism, the B.B.C. have all taken a hand, largely because they tend to trust to the knowledgeable rather than the genuinely learned man, and because they fancy themselves as knowledgeable intermediaries between learning and the general public—go-betweens, interpreters, neat devisers of pretty formulæ for gilding the pill.

EGO: I refuse to classify your last statement as a hare! It is either a red herring or an evening at the dogs. And if we are making an evening of it, doesn't this bring us back to your highbrow? May we not group with him the knowledgeable, and also the cranks and the poseurs and the commercial exploiters of learning, and say that much of the contempt for 'learning' that is felt or expressed by the ordinary man is actually not directed against learning itself but against these people and their works? More mistaken identification, in fact?

ALTER EGO: Yes. And we might add that those qualities of mind and manner which the ordinary man fancies he dislikes in men of learning—oddity, arrogance, condescension, 'swank'—are in point of fact the characteristics not of men of learning but of second-rate minds in any walk of life, whether it is learning, art or commerce. And it is in this category that the highbrow and the knowledgeable belong.

EGO: I have met a certain amount of brusque arrogance amongst men of learning, but I have never found it any more offensive than the equivalent cocksureness of other kinds of experts. The man of learning does not as a rule lay down the law upon subjects of which he knows nothing. The 'ordinary man' who is an expert in his own line but lacks the general discipline imposed upon thought by scholarship, is, on the whole, much more liable to dogmatize upon every subject under the sun.

ALTER EGO: In fact, when people profess contempt of learning, half the time they are expressing their very reasonable dislike either of the hangers-on and parasites of learning, or else of traits of character by no means peculiar to the learned.

THE CONTEMPT OF LEARNING

Which suggests that their own education, being itself deficient in quality, owing to its insistence on utilitarian aims, has turned them out unable to recognize quality when they see it, and unable to distinguish between the real and the sham.

EGO : Back to utilitarianism again ! By which, I take it, we mean as you said this afternoon, " training for paid employment for which the student neither has nor hopes to have a vocation ". Or, as it has also been called, " the pursuit of useful knowledge ".

ALTER EGO : " Useful knowledge " was what they gave girls in the worst period of female education ! You can't say we haven't been warned, that we haven't already tried it on the dog !

EGO : The results ought to have warned us. Nevertheless, some of our scientists are now telling us that the idea of learning for learning's sake is as dead as mutton, and that the only education the modern world has any ' use ' for is the one that is ' useful '.

ALTER EGO : This utility standard menaces us at every turn. Useful for what ? Does anybody judge by ' usefulness ' when summing-up what is or has been most worth-while in their lives ?

EGO : No. But dissatisfied parents and employers and unemployed young people find it a useful (!) parrot cry ; and it is always easier to make education and teachers the scapegoat than to push employment and employers into that rôle. Most people make the mistake of confusing education for life with training for a job. It ought to be possible to run them in double harness ; but the present attempt to do so seems as often as not to result in doing neither properly.

ALTER EGO : I think perhaps this particular mental and practical confusion helps to explain why contempt for learning is so to speak in the air ; why it is beginning to infect the representatives of learning, and why, for example, it so tinges the outlook even of parents who are in process of having their children educated that they cannot help communicating something of their attitude to those children. And, of course, the debunking, mainly by public school men, of the legend that schooldays are the happiest time of one's life, and the fierce

criticism to which the public school type of education has been subjected, have both helped to whip up a general disgruntlement. But what I want to get clear is this. We decided that contempt for learning has increased in direct ratio to the extension of educational facilities to all. Now, are there any social reasons, any changes in the fabric of social life since our own school days, which will help to explain why, in spite of all modern improvements, etc., children on the whole to-day seem to get less out of their education than we did ?

EGO : I think the change that has taken place in the home conditions of so many professional and middle-class families since the last war is partly responsible. The boarding-school child is perhaps hardly affected by it, but the day-school child pays heavily for that lack of stability and efficiency in the working of the household for which the domestic servant problem is so largely responsible. Flexibility is a good thing ; but if your energy is continually being diverted by household emergencies—amusing or distressing—you very easily lose the grip and concentration necessary for holding a straight course. A well-ordered domestic routine, functioning ‘regular as clockwork’, may be dull-ish ; but it provides the right kind of framework for the child who should be regarding education as the main business and occupation of life. It enables him to conserve his energies for getting on with the job.

ALTER EGO : Shrinkages of professional incomes and the steady converting of luxuries into necessities have done a lot to alter this kind of home life. People live in flats instead of houses. The schoolroom is abolished. If you want a car and an expensive radio set you must economize on room space and on extra fires and light.

EGO : Which means that the better-off child, like the poorer child, does its homework and its reading in the communal sitting-room, while Father has the expensive radio blaring all evening, and Mother chatters through it.

ALTER EGO : And when these children get to college—or so I’m told—they can’t work in the unnatural quiet and solitariness of rooms of their own. They have to have their wirelesses going while they write their essays ; they can’t bear to be alone, and have to go about in gangs and gaggles—

EGO : —over-stimulated the whole time, nervous energy sapped by the speed, the noise, the overcrowding. It does not make for quality.

ALTER EGO : That over-stimulation of the faculties is one of the curses of big-town life to-day.

EGO : A friend of mine who teaches in a London school, at present evacuated to a small country-town, tells me the resultant improvement in general alert receptivity, enthusiasm and interest is quite astonishing. Her really stupid Lower Fourth of thirteen-year-olds, for example, is reacting to *The Faerie Queene* with a lively delight and an intelligent appreciation which she says she can hardly parallel in twenty years' teaching experience ; and she puts it down entirely to the fact that they have been deprived of the usual distractions which absorb their capacity for æsthetic experience. In an ordinary way they would be going to theatres and concerts, and certainly two or three films each week.

ALTER EGO : In so-called " normal " times, in fact, saturation point is reached before they begin to think about giving any response to school work ! It seems to me that both parents and teachers are to blame for permitting such a state of affairs.

EGO : Of course they are ! Though they can both produce perfect alibis when you tackle them.

ALTER EGO : Education is no fun unless circumstances allow you to throw yourself whole-heartedly into the business, bringing to it all your faculties and energy, not only the bits left over from your real interests.

EGO : To come back to learning, I don't see how we can expect people either to respect it or give it genuine appreciation if they have never experienced for themselves both the habit of study and its arduous delight.

ALTER EGO : Then one of our practical remedies must be—Education for the young conceived as a whole-time job, and so planned that the normal adolescent can be reasonably expected to find it sufficiently vital and interesting and worthwhile for a real concentrating of his energies.

EGO : It must include the provision of leisure that is inalienably their own ; and exclude over-stimulation of the æsthetic faculties. But I don't think we need to worry

our heads about the remedies. The teaching profession is always clamouring for the essentials.

ALTER EGO : Essentials that the ordinary man is going to accept as such ?

EGO : Certainly. Shorter hours, smaller classes, overhaul of the curriculum, and dealing with the examination bogey. The teachers know all about this lack of quality, and are the first to lament it. They know by experience just what improvement is effected in one term, if for some special reason they are allowed to carry out any or all of these reforms with a backward class in their own schools.

ALTER EGO : Be practical. Who is to table these reforms ? And then carry them into effect ?

EGO : The teaching profession as a whole, of course.

ALTER EGO : Has it the power ?

EGO : No ; as things are at present. Yes, if it will scrap its inequalities, sink all its own rivalries and jealousies, and unite as a body. Then, as a profession, let it set its own house in order.

ALTER EGO : Can the teachers do this ?

EGO : Can they afford not to ?

ALTER EGO : It is, of course, only one aspect of the general social problem.

EGO : Admittedly. But let us have first things first—the individual human being, then the education which develops his potentialities ; after that, the employment problem. Employment exists for the human being, not vice versa. Education is fundamental. Therefore, to quote your distinguished self, my dear Socrates, why not ‘ begin here ’ ?

THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN—A BEGINNING

LETTICE COOPER

THE two decades between the last war and the present war already look like an island in history. We can see as little of them in perspective as a man sailing from the harbour of an island into stormy seas can see the whole contour and relief of the land that he is leaving. As he glances back with half his mind on the darkening sky and the mounting waves before him, a peak higher than the others, a window flashing light, a building pale against the sombre trees catch his eye. He remembers, there I climbed and there I slept, through that wood there was a winding road, by that church a square and a fountain, but they are disconnected images that he sees for a second before he turns again to face the storm. Such is our vision of the years that divided 1918 from 1939. Each man interprets the vision according to his temperament. It was an age of illusions now proved mirage, or of promise yet to be fulfilled, it was the end of civilization or the beginning of a new social and economic order. One thing is certain, our partial sight can only be guess work, yet even our guesses may have value, for without some idea of what made up the lost world and why it was lost, what hope have we of working out a new one ?

One peak to the retrospective eye stands clear of the mists, one movement of history is undeniable. During those years the position of women, legal, economic, social changed more than it has done during any twenty, or fifty, or a hundred years, in the history of this country. Women in those twenty years became citizens. They were granted first the partial and then the full franchise. They were admitted to the House of Commons, to the Bar, to all posts in the Civil Service, except for the diplomatic and consular services, which are still reserved for men only. They were placed on an equality with men in the position of guardian to a child. The divorce laws were

altered to allow a wife to divorce a husband on the same grounds as those on which a husband was allowed to divorce a wife. By the amendment of the Marriage Women's Property Act, the wife was granted for the first time full right to and responsibility for her property. With these legal alterations went in different degrees but in all sections of society a change in the social habits of women. These changes had begun in the last war, when women, because they were wanted to do the work of men, were allowed some of their liberties. The young woman of this period enjoyed a freedom that her mother had not dreamed of. She was spoken of as "emancipated" as in many ways she was. It is worth while to pause for a minute and ask how far she really was emancipated, and what was the human value of that emancipation? How far is she more of a person than she was? How much more does she contribute to society? How much more is she a whole human being and a happy human being for that gift of emancipation which some think came from the wand of a good fairy and some from a bad one?

Opinion is always impatient. When after centuries of wars and competitive nationalism, a League of Nations is born, tried out as a partial experiment, and fails in another twenty years time to avert another war, everyone cries out that the idea has been proved a failure. It is as though they discovered with astonishment that a three months old baby could not drive a car, and determined that he would never be fit to hold a licence. Women after thousands of years in which as citizens they have been treated as inferior, incapable and not to be trusted, are suddenly admitted to something approaching to equal citizenship. Because they do not at once become successful Prime Ministers, prevent war, or even show themselves entirely at home in their new circumstances, there are some people who cry out that the emancipation of women has been a failure. The truth is that the emancipation of women is only in its infancy. It has not yet grown old enough to be a success or a failure. Women are only now beginning to be citizens, and it is far too soon to tell yet what the value of their contribution may be, either to themselves or to the world.

It is quite understandable that those who expected quick results should be disappointed with what women have actually

achieved in public life in twenty-one years. There are very few women in Parliament, and of these only one has so far achieved Cabinet Rank. There are more women, certainly, in local government, but even here the proportion is still small. The female franchise, so much dreaded by some, has made little appreciable difference. I think that no important issue has arisen which anyone could say had been decided one way or another by the female vote, a thing which some people greatly feared when it was first introduced. England is still a man's country, ruled by men, her laws, national and local, mostly administered by men, her established Church entirely staffed by men, the high posts in her civil service nearly all filled by men. No woman has come to the fore during the last twenty years as a statesman, an administrator, an economist. Those who were afraid of the result of emancipation draw a breath of relief. Those who ardently hoped, who worked in those early struggles for women's citizenship are disappointed. But if it were possible to see the picture without bias . . . and it is almost impossible to see any part of the contemporary pattern without bias—I think that this slow and ineffectual beginning would not be surprising. The slave, freed of his chains, is not at once a free man. Habit and fear bind him, he imposes on himself the restrictions of which he has been relieved. Not only he, but generations before him have known submission as their only safety, and the knowledge in their blood constricts them as much as the external law. The slave, even when freed, is never free. His children may be. His grandchildren have a better chance. With a great sum, involuntarily paid, with no less a sum than the million lives lost in the last war, the women of our generation obtained this freedom. Their children and grandchildren may be free born.

I do not think that even when they are they will necessarily take the same share as men in public life. I doubt very much whether even with a fair field from the start, so many of them will be pre-eminent in politics, law, administration and the creative arts. It seems to me untruthful and ungenerous to deny that men have on the whole far greater intellectual and creative capacity than women. Great poets, musicians, artists, inventors, scholars, statesmen, scientists have nearly all been

men. The ardent feminist will say that the reason is that women have not yet had a fair chance. I agree, they have not, but I doubt if that is the whole reason. I do not think that women have the same kind of capacities. By the unalterable nature of their being they are and will remain those who receive ideas rather than those who beget them, those who conserve rather than those who initiate. As opportunity grows for women, no doubt they will produce far more creators and originators, but nothing will alter the fundamental fact that they have a natural, physical bias towards the passive rôle as men have towards the active. Of course neither is undiluted. There is some part of feminine nature in every man as there is some part of masculine nature in every woman. The proportions vary with every human being, just as the proportions of strong attraction and latent antagonism to the opposite sex vary in every human being, although both are always there. We were not born into an easy world nor to easy relationships. As every private adjustment between a man and a woman is difficult and irritating as well as rewarding and enchanting, so the adjustments of women with men in public life will always be stimulating, maddening, capable of infinite variety, certainly never easy, but also certainly well worth while.

It is a mistake only to look for the immediate effects of the emancipating laws in public life. No woman has yet become Prime Minister, there is as I write no woman in the Cabinet, but there are thousands of women leading a freer life. The young shop assistant or domestic servant goes off for a holiday with her boy unchaperoned, they pitch their tents side by side on a camping ground, and no one to-day is even surprised at such liberty or remembers how short a time they have enjoyed it. In middle class society, the girl growing up is no longer expected to sit about at home doing the flowers, playing the piano badly in the evening and waiting for a husband. She is much more likely to go out into the world to earn her living. So, if she gets married she brings to her marriage a wider experience, and if she does not, she will have work, interests and friends to fill her life. In a hundred small ways the altered legal position of women shows itself in their daily life. In the wife who spends her housekeeping allowance without accounting for every penny ;

which of us has not read *Little Women* and does not remember how John went through the items with Meg at the end of every month, while she blushed for her extravagant purchases of fancy boots and silk for a dress? The emancipating laws are visible in the family which no longer stints the girl of all education to spend everything on the boy, but tries to give both a chance; in the girl bicycling comfortably in shorts who goes with her young man into the bar of a public house; in the women's clubs where they entertain their friends male or female—a long way already from their first rather dreary and assertive beginnings. I have heard of one of the earliest which had a notice on the board “Men allowed in after four, and dogs on the lead”.

The attitudes of both men and women towards this question of emancipation are like dandelions with roots below the surface twice as long as the flower. Most of them are based on insecurity. Perhaps all fixed attitudes are based on insecurity. The frightened man becomes rigid. We fly for safety to our labels, hurriedly calling ourselves Progressive, Liberal, Left, Right, Feminist, Anti-feminist to avoid the impact of each separate truth on our naked minds, to make sure of joining some caravan for the perilous journey across unexplored country to the undiscovered end. Very few of us, approaching anything new, can think “What is this?” before we have shifted our straight vision by thinking “What can this do to me?”

This insecurity is at the bottom of the two feminine attitudes which retard and discredit emancipation. The first is the attitude of the militant feminist, the woman who is perpetually aggressive in her dealings with men, who urges the claims of her own sex beyond reason and justice, putting forward a woman for every job or opportunity because she is a woman and not because she is the most suitable candidate. A feminist of this kind is usually a little stupid, and often has a considerable pathological bias. She may be defending herself against an overwhelming desire for the passive rôle in her relationships with men, or desperately asserting an equality first challenged by some small brother in a family where it was made clear to her that a boy was a superior being. The second attitude is that of the woman who makes a great business of not being feminist.

She condemns "women who do things". She makes a deliberate appeal to male approval by affirming that she never could or would vote for a woman M.P., call in a woman doctor, approve of women in the government, etc. Obviously she too is moved by a fundamental insecurity. She feels that she must accentuate her submissiveness to make herself liked, that unless she emphasizes what is supposed to be femininity, she will lose the good will of men in which her self respect and vanity are so much involved. Again she may be reacting against an unconscious bias towards over submission and devotion to her own sex. She would describe herself as "very feminine". But her attitude is no more that of a whole woman than the attitude of the aggressive feminist. We are not by nature such single minded creatures in either direction.

The masculine attitude towards the emancipation of women is on the whole still hostile, though with varying degrees of consciousness. It has, like a good many attitudes, a solid basis in economics. When there are so many men unemployed, can they be expected to rejoice that the labour market is open to women? The whole-hearted feminist will say that although there is not enough to go round, men and women should have equal chances of getting what there is. In theory she is right. In practice the results are sometimes disastrous. It is not a good thing that the woman should keep the family while the man is out of work. I saw this happening to a great many families in the North of England during the slump years of the early nineteen thirties. Sometimes the father was on the dole and at home doing nothing while the mother worked in a shop or a factory. Sometimes a little girl of fourteen, who had just left school, could get work and earn a wage while her father, a strong man in the prime of life, could get nothing. It was demoralising for him and bad for the whole household. I am convinced that the happiest households are those in which the solid backbone is the husband and father. I do not mean those households in which he dominates the mother and suppresses the children—I am not advocating any Barretts of Wimpole Street—but in which he is the main provider and bread winner, the one who goes out into the world to make a living for those who depend on him, and who, until the children

are old enough to work should depend on him for support. In such a household although any matter of common interest and policy may be discussed freely, the father will determine the way of living a good deal because it will have to depend on the nature of his work, the place where his work lies and the amount he is paid for it. If his wife is earning and he is not, his position in the household passes to her, I believe often to their mutual loss.

I do not want to drag a Marxist red herring across the trail, or rather I do want to, but I believe that it is a true scent and that the trails run parallel. I do not believe that the emancipation of women will ever be fully achieved or satisfactory except as part of a general emancipation. When the division of this world's goods is less unfair, when so large a part of the population no longer live in a state of insecurity, there will be no reason for men to fear women as competitors who may thrust them out of the labour market. Those who in a hundred or two hundred years' time look back on this troubled period of history will, I think, see that the two movements towards greater justice and generosity, socialism and feminism, went forward together and suffered the same set backs. It is significant that Fascism, Naziism, whatever may be the local name of the general reaction against the coming of socialism, always includes the suppression of opportunities for women in the world outside the home.

It is, of course, not only a question of women who have homes. Women in this country outnumber men, and the disproportion, increased by the last war, is likely to be increased again by this one. There are thousands of unmarried women for whom opportunities to make their way in the various businesses and professions are a real necessity. Often they have older relations dependent on them. At one time they themselves would have been dependents in the houses of married brothers and sisters or other relations, but now the relations could not always afford to keep them, even if they themselves wanted to live a life of idleness and dependence. For them the world has certainly opened out and the new possibilities available to women have been an incalculable blessing. In the lives which many of them are leading, full of activity and usefulness, is one of

the most important results of the struggle which has borne fruit in the liberating laws of the last twenty years.

The basis of any social and political attitude, while nearly always partly economic, is very seldom economic alone. I think that when both men and women consider the emancipation of women, they have a fear that a fundamental relationship would be upset by it, that women would be distracted from their primary business of loving and bearing children, and making a home. I agree that for the majority of them this is their primary business and that being so, I do not think they will easily be distracted from it. It is better, surely, that they should do it because they want to do it than because they are not allowed to do other things? I am not arguing that a career is better than a husband, children and home, but that a woman need not necessarily have to choose between the two, and if she does, it is better that she should choose husband and home of her own free will. A man always has preoccupations and interests outside his home. A woman, if she has none, will look to her husband and children for full emotional satisfaction. If the husband can give her that, well and good, they will probably be a happy family. But if he can't, and since she is to be part of his life while he is to be the whole of hers, he will have to be something of a person to do it, she will turn to the children. It is good for children to be loved and cared for, but it is not good for them to be called on to supply the deficiencies in a grown up relationship, and it is not good for them, after they leave the breast and perhaps even before, to be the sole objects of their mother's care and interest. Instead of going out every five minutes to see what they are doing in the garden, she had much better leave them to quarrel, cut their knees, and use the pea sticks for wigwams, while she goes off to her Clinic, or is absorbed in painting her picture upstairs. The man who wants a woman to spend her whole life loving him and looking after him must be able to make her feel it worth while. Is it again insecurity, the knowledge that he can't, that makes him sometimes so suspicious of the claims of the outside world?

Only insecurity need make him afraid of them, for no emancipating laws have so far altered the fact that to women especially the emotional life comes first, the people whom they

love are, except in rare cases, nearer to the middle of their heart than the work they do, and their desire for stability, for home and family, is stronger than their desire for action. Of course there are exceptions. Of course the degree and proportion of feeling varies with each individual, but that is the general trend of their nature. I see no reason to suppose that it will be altered by greater freedom of action and by wider opportunities. The liberated person, man or woman, is generally more himself or herself, not less. I see no reason to suppose that it will ever alter, unless after centuries of evolution the human race finds itself entirely different in a completely different world.

EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

ONLY one thing would have been less bearable than the news of France's complete submission and this would have been to watch the most precious material in Europe wasted in a hopeless struggle, ending by the collapse of despair. Nevertheless the terms of Armistice come as a great shock to this country. Meanwhile the United States can be active in aiding Great Britain to put the allies in possession of superiority—not only at sea but in the air. If the existing naval superiority were doubled as it would be by America's entry, and numerical preponderance in the air attained, the situation would look very different. And these are not impossibilities. If these aims are not achieved, it will imply a great failure of effort in the English speaking peoples.

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It is amazing that the Prime Minister should have needed to remind us when evacuation was complete that we had suffered a vast military disaster. I myself who am old and have followed with passionate attention the movement of two great wars needed the warning against over-
Dunkirk elation. Yet with the warning full in mind, and facing the facts as far as I can grasp them, I set down my inmost conviction. The forces which carried through that rescue are forces that cannot be beaten. It was England's mastery of the sea, manifesting itself with such a mixture of gallantry and utter competence as the world never saw surpassed.

The navy was in charge ; but who did the navy not include ? Mr. Priestley in the best talk that I have ever heard given on the wireless paid his tribute to the little excursion steamers, rising to an appropriate climax when he told what the *Gracie Fields* had been before and how this queen of the Isle of Wight's ferry boats went to her glorious end. The Germans have

accomplished marvels with their planned machinery of destruction, but here was, one might say, the ruck of ordinary British humanity sweeping into service all the appliances of good-humoured commonplace existence, alongside of the thirty-knot greyhounds of the fleet.

Every man who reached Dunkirk must have gone through simply insane physical fatigue. How it was done, I cannot guess; the battalion which I knew in the last war was good enough to carry a position six times attacked before; but a march of fifteen miles was gruelling for them. And they hated marching; I doubt whether any British troops take kindly to it. Yet these men in their retreat sometimes covered thirty miles in the twenty-four hours—one unit, it is said, reached forty. Rest and sleep only in snatches, and all the time under attack. Their company commanders and platoon commanders and sergeants shepherded them along, God knows how, and I am sure that many and many an officer relieved a private of his rifle, till the need came to use it. But exhaustion like that sustained over a fortnight and more is far more terrible than any extremity of danger. I doubt whether even in the early days of 1914 troops endured anything approaching it—and certainly they had not the scourge of air attack.

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One story stood out for me—that of fifteen nurses who like the troops had waded neck-deep to be picked up; they were promptly put to bed, tucked up in ship's blankets and when they reached the port, had their clothes handed back to them, washed and dried and ironed. There was I am very sure much joking over that job and perhaps not all of it for convent ears. But the men who did that piece of work, British navy fashion, were men who probably in forty-eight hours had not had forty-eight minutes of rest. Those ladies who had been through three days at Dunkirk, tending the wounded, deserved the best; but not all the roses and lilies that ever were in Covent Garden could have made so fine a bouquet as that attention.

**The Navy's
Way**

And the chivalrous cheerfulness, the good humour and even the touch of laughter, makes it characteristic of the whole. The effort was no spasm of hectic frenzy or despair; it came

from a healthy, well-nourished valiant people, putting forth its powers, well able to produce and to use the most formidable machinery, but in an emergency using whatever would help. The straits of Dover must have been like a vast cornfield in which motor reapers were at work and horse-drawn reapers, but along with them too, a mob of workers at scythe and even sickle. Only in that cornfield all worked under fire and the sickle-men were the least protected.

* * * * *

I have written of the greatest neutral ; I have to write of one of the smallest— Ireland, or, to speak by the card, Eire. My countrymen begin to be alarmed ; they are taking
Eire measures, as the Dutch did, to defend themselves separately “against all comers”, and in the meantime sedulously to maintain and assert their neutrality. Yet there is not a man or woman in Ireland capable of clear thought who does not know that Ireland’s immunity from attack is due simply and solely to the British Navy. Neutrality has two strategic consequences, one of which is more important than the other. The less important is that Eire holds three naval bases, which she cannot use (having no fleet) and the use of which she denies to the navy that protects her. The British Navy has got on without the use of these ports and keeps the seas open to Ireland, and is likely to do so ; yet a valuable strategic asset is wasted. General Hertzog, when he proposed that South Africa should remain neutral, proposed to give the British Fleet access to South African harbours. Whether this was logical or no, it showed a sense of facts which is denied to Mr. de Valera. The other and more important consequence is that Eire, as a neutral state, harbours a German legation and consular service. There can be no trade between Germany and Ireland, and those German officials have now no open means of communication with their own state. They can, in the nature of things, have only one business and it is only fair to assume that they will do it ably and industriously. They will assist in every way in their power the activities of the Fifth Column for which the elements abound in all parts of Ireland, but more especially in Eire. Joined to the allies, Eire would be free from this

demoralizing source of danger ; in every other respect her position would be as safe as it is now.

But Mr. de Valera would say that the unity of the country would be imperilled. His notion of unity consists in evading anything that can be held to shock such Republicans as he has not been constrained to put in jail. I think of quite other elements, the ex-service men, some two hundred thousand in the island, of whom probably three-quarters are in Eire. He appeals to them to join his defence force ; and some will, and I hope many. But many will say that his policy lacks commonsense. The only threat to Ireland's freedom comes from Germany and to maintain the appearance of friendly relations, to harbour German agents, is not commonsense. It is held to be defeatist to say that Ireland would not defend itself. Irishmen are no less brave than Norsemen, and look at Norway. Mr. Dillon, who very rightly stands for unity, says that whoever seeks to conquer Ireland takes on a seven hundred years war. As much might be said of Poland, and that did not deter Hitler. I believe that Poland will fight back to freedom, and Ireland, if overrun by Germans, might do the same. But I do not wish to see my country pass through what Poland has endured and is enduring. I do not expect to see that—but for one reason only. I believe the British Navy will continue to hold the seas. In regard to the question of partition, which Mr. de Valera regards as capital, the attitude to which he has committed Eire postpones indefinitely the unity of Ireland. The only men who in my lifetime did anything practical to bring about that unity were those who fought side by side in Flanders.

"Never has the British Empire been so necessary to the world as it is to-day, and never has it been in greater danger of destruction," says

F. J. C. HEARNshaw

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HARRAP

THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

GERMANY OR PRUSSIA?

By SIR JOHN MARRIOTT

EXIT PRUSSIA, by Edgar Stern-Rubarth. *Duckworth.* 6s.

THE TOTALITARIAN ENEMY, by F. Borkenau. *Faber & Faber.* 10s. 6d.

GERMANY THE AGGRESSOR, by F. J. C. Hearnshaw. *Chambers.* 7s. 6d.

At the moment (June 8) when a terrific battle is raging on the Somme it may seem untimely to read, still more to review, these books. But for one who is unhappily debarred from active service it is surely otherwise. In bringing Dr. Stern-Rubarth's book to the notice of the readers of the FORTNIGHTLY, I am convinced that I am rendering a national service. *Exit Prussia* is not a long book; it contains little more than 200 pages; but those pages are full of wisdom. Of the main thesis of this book I am (let me confess) the more enamoured, since it emphasizes a truth that, with less authority and force, I have myself frequently endeavoured to proclaim. Incidentally it affords a wholesome corrective of the fault which vitiates the otherwise admirable book of Professor Hearnshaw. It is not Germany which has been consistently the aggressor. It is Prussia. It was Prussia that attacked Denmark in 1864; made war on the Germanic Federation in 1866, and

(with the support of the other German States) invaded France in 1870. It was a Prussianized Germany that plunged Europe into war in 1914 and 1939.

These are the facts that give Dr. Stern-Rubarth his clue. He follows it with all the skill of an experienced journalist. His book is at once analytical and constructive. Analytically, he shows that the true Germany is Germany west of the Elbe; its spiritual capital is not Berlin but Weimar, and it might, if reorganized on the lines desired by the author, find its political capital at Vienna or Frankfurt-on-Main. While recognizing the advantages which Germany enjoyed under the old system of *Klein-Staterie* the author shows no disposition to recreate that system; he insists that, even when cumbered by its association with the Holy Roman Empire, 'the old Germany was in herself a unit'. He admits, indeed, that it would be foolish 'to speak of a German race in the sense which the Nazi myth has given to that conception'. The almost continuous presence of foreign armies on German soil has doubtless 'left traces in the stream of modern Germany's population . . . but the German landscape alternately lovely and heroic, the German language . . . co-operated in preserving that great

people between the North Sea and the Alps, the Rhine and the Elbe, as a very definite entity'. (pages 75-6).

East of the Elbe lies Prussia, which, with characteristics wholly alien to those of the true Germany, must, in the author's scheme, form a separate entity. Prussia, as Mirabeau said in 1755 'is not a nation possessing an army; she is an army which has conquered a nation'. So Dr. Stern-Rubarth comes to his main thesis—an independent and homogeneous Prussia must be established outside of the Reich. It may be that Prussia, fundamentally Slavonic rather than Germanic, will join in a Western Slav Federation with Czecho-Slovakia and Poland, while Germany proper would form a unit in the European Federation to which the author looks forward.

On this much discussed question of Federal union, Dr. Stern-Rubarth's views, hopes and anticipations are eminently sane. He does not shirk the difficulties to be overcome. We cannot, he insists, follow the American model. Nor can Federation be achieved at a single step. The process must be by progressive stages. Moreover, the European Union can be formed only of units practically equal in size and power. The smaller states, therefore, must come in as Federations within the Federation. One such unit would presumably consist of the Oslo Group and another of the Balkan States, and so on. 'Europe,' as the author truly says, 'cannot be built by a haphazard cementing together of unequal, unbalanced pieces of masonry. There is fitting to be done, preparing the individual national units for their ultimate consolidation into a well-balanced architectural design.'

Dr. Stern-Rubarth does not confine

himself to political reconstruction. Economic reconstruction must, in his view, be not less drastic. His plan he describes as "Correctivism" as opposed both to Bolshevism and Fascism, and he sets it out in considerable detail. It is in effect a compromise between individualism and Socialism, in both of which he appears to believe.

Space fails me to examine it with the precision it demands. Space also fails to allow me to do more than mention Mr. F. Borkenau's thoughtful volume *The Totalitarian Enemy*. His analysis is less political than sociological and psychological. He insists that Nazism is far more closely akin to Bolshevism than has been commonly supposed, and can be understood only if that truth is realized. Moreover, the Nazi movement 'consists of desperadoes' whose domination can continue only so long as they can prevent a return to normality. With Nazism, therefore, we can make a truce but never conclude peace. For this inadequate notice I can only make amends to Mr. Borkenau by advising students to read the book for themselves.

About Professor Hearnshaw's book I have less qualms, as I have already expressed my cordial appreciation of it elsewhere. Readers in plenty it is sure to have, and they will be well advised to read Dr. Hearnshaw in conjunction with Dr. Stern-Rubarth.

MASARYK, by Paul Selver. *Michael Joseph*. 18s.

Thomas Masaryk was the one supremely great statesman of our times. About all the others, Briand, Wilson, Lloyd George, Stresemann or Atatürk there will always be quarrels or controversy, but Masaryk has already won

his undisputed fame. He alone came near to the Greek ideal of the Philosopher-King. Even the bitterest enemies of the Czechoslovak Republic have not dared attack him, but have concentrated their fire on his friend and pupil, Benesh, even Konrad Henlein spoke of him with apparent respect and admiration; Hitler himself has not ventured openly to deflower his memory.

Why was Masaryk so clearly a great man? Mr. Selver's book gives us something, though not all, of the answer. Masaryk was a blend of hero, saint and practical philosopher; not only a skilled and far-sighted statesman but a good man; a 'realist' thinker who carried out in politics the political and moral theories he had taught all his life. His philosophy of realism was not simply a lecture-room theory, it was a guiding principle by which he believed the Czechoslovak people must work out their regeneration. Clear thinking, the search for facts, for truth, its disentanglement from the jungle of lies and fallacies surrounding it—that was what Masaryk believed in. Policy must be based on truth alone, and never, during the whole of his career, did he seize upon some popular misunderstanding or mistaken belief and exploit it for his own advantage or for the cause for which he was working. On the contrary, he exposed such fallacies time after time, at the cost of bitter vilification.

Yet he was never intolerant. He believed that truth has many sides, and that others might see sides he had not seen, or that he thought unimportant or distorted. As he said to Karel Capek near the end of his life, "I have not needed to change one item of my faith in humanity or in democracy, in the search for truth, nor in the supreme

moral and religious command to love men. . . . The human and social ideals which I confessed have endured and become acknowledged through all those trials. I can tell myself that in that incessant struggle for a better nation and people I was on the right side".

We all need to study Masaryk's life now, when a second war is being fought in the name of the principles for which he always stood. Mr. Selver's truthful, enlightening and enthralling book provides us with the means to do so. His account of Masaryk's early life is especially interesting—the story of the Slovak coachman's son who fought his way upwards to become, at the age of 32, the first occupant of the Chair of Philosophy at the revived Czech University of Prague. For over thirty years he was one of the chief influences upon Czech, Slovak and Southern Slav students — "Masaryk's pupils have united the Serbs and Croats of Dalmatia", wrote Hermann Bahr, the famous Austrian Liberal, "and are now bringing that distracted province to have faith in the future—so strong is the influence of the lonely Slovak in Prague." Lonely, Masaryk certainly was for many years; his devotion to truth and to the vindication of the wronged often brought him desperate unpopularity. Mr. Selver gives three classic examples of this: Masaryk's exposure as forgeries of the two famous Czech ballads of Kralové Dvur and Zelená Hora earned him the foulest abuse from the fanatical Czech nationalists; his championship of a Jew on trial for 'ritual murder' infuriated the anti-Semitic and reactionary clerical circles which spawned the modern Jew baiting of Julius Streicher; his conversion from Catholicism to a tolerant Protestantism

caused another stupid and frenzied attack upon him from these same clericals.

Mr. Selver treats the war of 1914—1918 somewhat sketchily, but the chief criticism I have to make of his book is that it stops short at 1918. The one remaining chapter, on Masaryk as President, is the barest chronology, which tells us nothing of Masaryk's great achievements and influence in the Republic. Mr. Selver says that "these are matters which belong less to the life of Masaryk than to the political history of Czechoslovakia", but this does not seem an adequate justification—after all, the main events of Masaryk's life between 1890 and 1914 belong equally to the political history of Austria-Hungary, yet nobody would suggest that that part of his life should therefore be omitted. It is to be hoped that in another edition Mr. Selver will rectify this mistake.

JOAN GRIFFIN.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MODERN ARCHITECTURE, by J. M. Richards.
Pelican Books. 6d.

The fact that most English people think, with justification, of architecture as a pleasant and even at times a soul-stirring thing that happened in the past and particularly in the middle ages and think hardly at all of modern architecture partly explains why Mr. Richards's *Introduction to Modern Architecture* is forced to be a polemic for a minority movement. If during the past hundred years architecture had not been out of touch with life the words "contemporary" and "modern" would be synonymous; but they are not. At the start of the industrial revolution architecture, frightened by

the increasing complexities of the new technologies, hid itself in the consoling bosom of History. As a result we now have the works of a century of escape and compromise which drive some in despair to what remains of a lovely past and Mr. Richards hopefully to what men of spirit can yet make a brilliant future.

Mr. Richards's book is the most important book on architecture written for the general English public for many years, even if now, when almost all opportunities for æsthetically and socially significant building has passed, it has a nostalgic quality and is deprived of some of its reality. None the less if it helps the English public to an understanding of the essentials of architecture so that post-war building may be enabled to start, as it should, from the public conscience and not from the enthusiasms, only, of a minority, the book will have been invaluable.

The *Introduction* is a marvel of simple clear writing, exactly adjusted to the needs and the understanding of the people for whom it is intended. It is very easy for a writer who presents a subject such as this to the general public to write down to his audience or to confuse the theme by over-emphasizing little matters of passionate dispute which are of concern only to the specialists, but Mr. Richards's understanding and lucidity have combined to make a book which will satisfy the general reader who does not pretend to know anything about architecture (those for whom the book is primarily intended), and the serious student who will find no point of importance neglected in the history of the rise of modern architecture and its contemporary practice. Both kinds of reader will be delighted and informed by the forty-two remarkably well chosen

and reproduced illustrations of modern buildings in England and Europe.

It would be easy to dispute some of Mr. Richards's statements but that is not what is wanted ; we have here an intelligent survey of one of the most vitally important of all human activities—for there is hardly any part of civilized man's life which is not controlled or affected by the buildings in which he lives and works. For a century architecture ran away until in the years before the war, particularly in the progressive democracies whose independence we now mourn, there developed, as a conscious and popularly accepted index of national spirit, a new modern architecture. Here in England the old drearinesses have been so deeply entrenched that so far little place has been found for the clear headedness and the shining impulsive beauties of the new architecture. The Introduction is a cheaply acquired means for anyone to obtain the basis of understanding and enthusiasm to enable him to play his part as a layman in getting the buildings our post-war civilization will need, even if it does not deserve them.

EDWARD CARTER.

GEORGE VILLIERS, First Duke of Buckingham, by Hugh Ross Williamson. *Duckworth*. 15s.

"A favourite has no friend", as Gray sang of his cat Selima. The Duke of Buckingham, who had honours and offices loaded on him by James I. (Mr. Williamson has listed nearly a page of them) and to whom alone his son Charles gave his confidence, died as little mourned as Selima. Had he been merely the beautiful minion using his good fortune to advance his family, he might have been contemptuously

ignored by Parliament and people. But Buckingham became almost a dictator. Power was his to play with, and he played atrociously. Whatever might be said for his personal qualities, his administrative faults were so disastrous in their consequences that no apologist has attempted to justify this statesman whose assassin went as a hero to his death. Sir Henry Wotton afterwards wrote Buckingham's praise, but this was a friendly tribute, taking little notice of policies and effects. His first 'disinterested' biographer, Mrs. Thomson, in 1860, loosely filled out three volumes of frank and kindly narrative, dwelling where possible on the human side of history, and discrediting almost with laughter the once-popular belief that the Duke had poisoned his master James I. Still, an essayist in the 'eighties' was able to remark that the Duke "has not yet been white-washed".

Mr. Ross Williamson condemns his hero more than any of them, seeing in him, not a symptom, but a potent cause of the Stuart collapse. There is little doubt, as he presents the case, that Buckingham was largely responsible for the alienation between Crown and Parliament that reached its crisis after he was gone, with Charles's execution. His foolish and impudent handling of the abortive marriage expedition to Spain with its secret assurances and counter-promises to both Catholics and Protestants was only surpassed in incompetence by his later policy in France and at home, and the fond aim of capturing Spanish treasure ships to finance his military expeditions.

In all these later actions he held Charles meekly in his hands, wielding a power he could never have hoped for in James's time. This last consideration

has led Mr. Williamson rather surprisingly to complete his indictment by returning to the old contention that Buckingham poisoned James. Motive had been denied him when it was assumed that he was satisfied with James's blessings. But power, coupled with a fear that some of his Spanish duplicities were about to be unmasked, are substantial enough motives in a mind that can dispense with loyalty and gratitude. There is also the suspicion that James had quarrelled with his favourite. Since the only evidence that can settle a poison case is medical, small chance remains of the question being decided; Mr. Williamson strongly urges the verdict "guilty", but can bring no proof.

If Buckingham was a villain he was at least a smiling one, whose manner could be captivating as well as insolent. Mr. Williamson, whose preference is for narrative and argument rather than portraiture, appears to understate this kindlier aspect. In contrast to Mrs. Thomson's sprawling and genial volumes here is abundant material closely, almost harshly, packed, and the effect is merciless. He refers to his "biographical attitude to history", due to the belief that major events are caused by human wills. This implies, naturally, a historical treatment of biography, whereby a man is observed solely for his influence on the course of events. The lack of a personal approach is atoned for in the appendices where a number of Buckingham's letters to James—addressed "Dear Dad and Gossip" from "Your majesty's humble slave and dog, Steenie"—are printed for the first time. Further, the Duke's elaborate speech to the Commons giving his own version of the Spanish journey, is here in full; Mr. Williamson has

played fair to his readers. Though he modestly calls his work "a study for a biography", only the most eager student of the Stuart reigns will feel inclined to hunt through the unpublished papers for more than he has given us.

SYLVA NORMAN.

NATIVE SON, by Richard Wright.
Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

This is the story of a young Chicago negro who kills his employer's daughter, tries to extract ransom money in the approved gangster style from her parents, rapes and murders his young negro mistress, and, after a running fight over the city's snowbound rooftops, is caught, tried and sentenced to the electric chair.

The killing of the white girl is really nothing more than manslaughter; "Bigger" is left with the girl in a drunken state late at night by her Communist friend. In getting her to her bedroom he is surprised by her blind mother and, to prevent the girl giving away his presence, pushes a pillow into her mouth. Terrified to find after her mother's departure that he has suffocated her, he cuts off her head with an axe and pushes the body into the boiler furnace.

Though the reader is left with the impression that "Bigger" might have committed rape, had Mrs. Dalton not entered her daughter's room, some sympathy for the negro is enlisted by the fact that he had no desire to be put into a compromising position with the girl and killed her through a mixture of fear and acute emotional upset. "Bigger's" destruction of the body is equally understandable; he is convinced that the white world will hold him, a black man, as guilty of murder. One's measure of sympathy, however, even

over this episode is tempered by the fact that he has already brutally assaulted another young negro who is afraid to act as an accomplice with him in an intended act of burglary. As to his subsequent acts, especially the murder of his mistress out of fear that she will be an unnecessary burden in making an escape, one is filled merely with cold disgust. Only towards the very end of the story, when "Bigger" attempts to explain his emotions and actions—those of a black frustrated in the midst of a civilization made for white men—to his Jewish counsel, does any gleam of feeling for this character again penetrate one's consciousness.

I would not have devoted so much space to this review except for a rather challenging notice on the book's paper wrapping. This claims that "*like Grapes of Wrath*, it is a fully realized story of unfortunates, uncompromisingly realistic". Now there has been a growing tendency in recent months, in book reviews and elsewhere, to present these particular trans-Atlantic imports, dealing with morons and decadents, as works of dynamic literary art. This is much to be deplored at a time when the United States is producing fictional literature of fine original strength and beauty. Mr. Wright's book would have gained greatly in its appeal, both as literature and as propaganda for a cause, had he allowed his hero to be a fairly normal negro subsequently rendered abnormal by the pressure of circumstances. As it is, it falls between two stools. It is not a work of compelling literary art; it takes a Shakespeare to invest a psychopathic homicide with an aura that appeals to our sympathy. Nor is it compelling propaganda, for it is impossible to base an appeal for the solution of the undoubtedly serious

problem of the black minority in the United States on the experiences of a homicidal and sexual maniac of an extreme type.

This book is a cross between a medical case-history and a film scenario. As such it should find a place on the bookshelves of alienists and should also receive a rapturous welcome in Hollywood.

EDWARD LIVING.

BROTHER TO THE OX, by Fred Kitchen. *Dent*. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Kitchen is a farm-hand who has spent most of his years on small farms in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. His book is an exact and lively record of his work on these farms, from the days when, at twelve years old, he laboured from six in the morning until six at night for the welcome sum of nine shillings a week, to the present time. Humorous, generous, richly informed, his story is the story of thousands of farm-hands, written by one of themselves.

One of themselves—but with a difference. Mr. Kitchen differs from most farm-hands of his own time and age in that he has always been a reader. "Life has been made rich," he says, "because when ploughing up a nest of field-mice I could recite Burns's *Ode to a Field-mouse*." He is also a poet—"it doesn't take much to make me break into poetry". On and off, from early days he has kept a diary; but it was not until 1933 that he joined the W.E.A. and, encouraged by his tutor, began sending out his work to the magazines. For the present book, however, we are apparently indebted to "our Lizzie": "Lots of folk get their lives into print nowadays," she said, "so why not a farm-labourer?"

The result is a book of genuine worth. Perhaps it rather falls to pieces towards the end, where the continuous narrative gives place to odds and ends taken from the diary; but for the most part, *Brother to the Ox* is a story which Richard Jefferies would certainly have loved and which George Borrow (if he had had the same advantages) might well have written. Here is farm-labouring as the farm-labourer himself sees it—or as the farm-labourer would see it if he were blessed with Mr. Kitchen's sensitive eye.

Indeed, it is his advantage over most country writers that, like Clare, he is a practitioner and not merely a sympathetic onlooker. The land has been his life; and when he writes of ploughing or threshing, his descriptions have an actuality that even a Hardy's must lack. Take, for instance, this:—

One thing I have always noticed when chipping stubbles, you turn over scores of field mice, nests of them, pink and naked. They are thrown on the ploughing, and you seldom see them at other times, only after harvest. As a lad I always felt like stopping to rescue the little beggars, but a flock of crows following behind soon cleared the furrow of any mouse not big enough to run away.

Instances of such eye-on-the-scene descriptions could be quoted from almost any page.

Another advantage which Mr. Kitchen possesses over the rest of us who write about the country is that he begins with no literary handicap. The result is a style as fresh and open and honest as the sky itself. When he says "Over all was the pleasant smell of dead horse-chestnut leaves and stable litter: I can smell it now as I write about it", you know at once that this is exactly true. "The rock was limestone," he says of one of his earlier farms, "and

in places showed through the soil, like the bare bones of a mammoth skeleton", and his own style, direct as Bunyan's himself, is much like this.

The output of country books grows yearly and it is noticeable that here, as in every other branch of writing, the romantic view has given place to the sensitively expressed fact. Mr. Kitchen's book is a model of such dignified exactitude and should win many friends. Perhaps the following extract will serve better than anything else to illustrate the unromanticized, factual poetry which is his chief asset:

Artists have drawn some pleasing pictures of the shepherd leading his flock on the grassy uplands, or gazing pensively at a setting sun, but we have no picture of the shepherd in the muddy turnip field; of him and his lad sliding about in the muddy sheep-pen with skeps of sliced turnips; or the lad, bending down to clean out the troughs, receiving a gallant charge in the rear from a too-playful tup; or when snow and sleet swirls round their ears they 'chop and throw' in defiance of foul weather.

C. HENRY WARREN.

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG DOG, by Dylan Thomas.
Dent. 7s. 6d.

THE BACKWARD SON, by Stephen Spender. *Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.*

FOLIOS OF NEW WRITING, edited by John Lehman. *Hogarth Press. 5s.*

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Puppy would, perhaps, have been the better title. For Mr. Dylan Thomas is, to a section of intelligentzia which always likes to have somebody to spoil, the young puppy of contemporary poetry, an engaging, impudent, versatile, inexhaustible bundle of energy performing with limbs that are still more gristle than bone all the precocious tricks of word-making that are beyond

the capacity of the older dogs. To those poetasters who have forgotten the trick but not the thrill of pursuing their own tails the sight of Mr. Thomas doing so is, no doubt, very exciting. With such an audience watching, it is not surprising that Mr. Thomas gives a performance. Yapping, tumbling, tail-chasing, wicked and saucy, sometimes showing a glimpse of his teeth and taking a snap at the pants of respectability, Mr. Thomas has a lovely time. By reason of its title his book invites comparison with Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist*, but there is little except an odd burst of bright language, apparently nearer to Mrs. Dalloway than Stephen Dedalus, which can be considered in the same breath as that tender masterpiece. The novel which is an exploration of child consciousness is still, in spite of public weariness, a popular subject with writers. A preoccupation with small girls and lavatories, the desire to write the word bum on the garden gate, a readiness to be sick on frequent occasions—these were all parts of the novel of antic hay-making long before Mr. Thomas burst on the scene. Like the puppy which chases its own tail Mr. Thomas appears to suffer from the slightly cock-sure impression that he is doing it for the first time.

Mr. Spender is also a poet; his novel is also a reconstruction of a part of childhood. A review of both books could be devoted to a thesis of the contemporary state of things that forces a poet, in the struggle either for existence or simple recognition, to devote a large part of his time to working in a medium for which he is unfitted. For neither Mr. Thomas nor Mr. Spender are really novelists; it is a tragedy that they and their fellow-poets should be driven to sacrifice the palette, as it were,

for the distemper pot. Beautifully as Mr. Spender writes—and throughout his picture of the sensitive boy struggling at school against conscience, homesickness, cruelty and himself, he writes with a clear, mature delicacy—his first essay as a novelist can hardly have the effect, or importance, of his work as a poet. Every word of his novel is a brush-stroke put in by an artist, yet the resultant picture, however tenderly conceived, is not new. The rather sadistic headmaster, the matron, the boys with their passion for games, railway trains and sex; the suffering of leaving home, the implication that in the struggle between the sensitive and the hard-boiled the victory is always on the wrong side—all this has been painted many times before. Of all forms of criticism the most unsatisfactory is that which extends praise in one hand and withholds it in the other yet I can see no other way of assessing Mr. Spender's book. For all the truth of its tender exploration of boyhood suffering and its beauty of touch, *The Backward Son* lacks the fullest expression of the true poet somewhere hiding behind it.

The salute to *New Writing*, resurrected under a new title but under the same editorship and with the same sensible ideal of being "a laboratory where the writers of the future may experiment", must be brief but enthusiastic. Here, in *New Writing*, Mr. Spender and his fellow poets can occupy their proper place; short story writers like G. F. Green and H. T. Hopkinson, commentators like Henry Green, Rosamund Lehmann and George Barker, can speak their minds and hearts properly. Like its editor, I hope that *New Writing* will remain for a long time "a vital impulse for the days to come". H. E. BATES.